



UNITED NATIONS
KOSOVO TEAM



United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021 - 2025



@ArbenLlapashtica2017



Joint Statement

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (hereafter Cooperation Framework) will guide the work of the United Nations development system in Kosovo¹ through 2025. This framework builds on the successes and lessons learned of the past cooperation and represents a joint commitment by the United Nations development system to work in close partnership with the authorities of Kosovo for the achievement of its priorities framed by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), regional integration objectives and international human rights commitments and principles. The collective results expected from this Cooperation Framework will help the people of Kosovo to live healthier, longer and more dignified, prosperous and secure lives.

In signing hereafter, the participating United Nations development system agencies, funds and programmes endorse this Cooperation Framework and underscore their joint commitment towards the achievement of its results.

In witness thereof, the undersigned, being duly authorised, have signed this United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the period of 2021–2025 on 3 December 2020 in Pristina, underscoring their joint commitment to its priorities and cooperation results.

United Nations Kosovo Team

Ulrika Richardson



United Nations Development Coordinator

¹ References to Kosovo shall be understood in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

FAO

Raimund Jehle
Regional Programme Leader for Europe and Central Asia



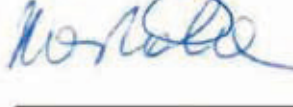
ILO

Markus Pilgrim
Director, ILO Office for Central and Eastern Europe



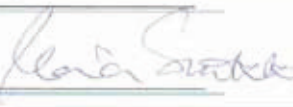
IOM

Anna Rostocka
Chief of Mission



UNDP

Maria Suokko
Resident Representative



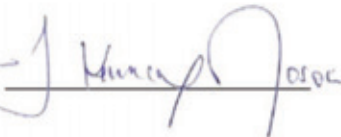
UNEP

Bruno Pozzi
Director, Europe Office



UNFPA

John Kennedy Mosoti
Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Country Director for Serbia, Republic of North Macedonia and Director for Kosovo



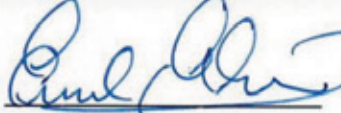
UN-Habitat

Paulius Kulikauskas,
Chief, UN-Habitat Office for Europe and European Institutions



UNHCR

Erol Arduc
Chief of Mission



UNICEF

Murat Sahin
Head of Office



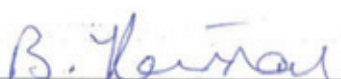
UNODC

Rositsa Zaharieva
Rule of Law Advisor



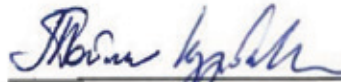
UNOPS

Brendan Keirnan
Head of Office



UNV

Toily Kurbanov
Officer-in-Charge



UN WOMEN

Alia El-Yassir
Regional Director, Europe and Central Asia Regional Office



WHO

Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge
Regional Director for Europe



UNECE

Dmitry Mariyasin

Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Economic
Commission for Europe



Note: UNECE joined the United Nations Kosovo Team in 2022. Following an exchange of letters between Development Coordinator Arnhild Spence and Prime Minister Albin Kurti as co-chairs of the Joint Steering Committee, with this signature, UNECE expresses its endorsement of this Cooperation Framework and underscores its commitment towards the achievement of its results.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021–2025 (Cooperation Framework) articulates the United Nations development system’s cooperation with Kosovo institutions and partners over the next five years. Underpinned by solid analysis of key social, economic and environmental challenges, the Cooperation Framework aims to support progress towards sustainable development in Kosovo anchored around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in line with government and regional integration priorities. In short, the Cooperation Framework expresses collective aspirations for a prosperous, inclusive, and resilient sustainable development for Kosovo.

Since the end of the conflict in 1999 and its declaration of independence in 2008, Kosovo has made notable progress in terms of stability, democratisation, rule of law and governance as well as economic reconstruction. The prospect of integration into the European Union (EU) presents further incentives for sustaining peace and accelerated and sustainable development, despite many persisting challenges such as limited progress on reforms in areas of public administration and administration of justice as well as implementation of human rights legislation and strategies..

The process leading to the elaboration of the Cooperation Framework entailed extensive consultations with key stakeholders among government institutions, civil society organizations and international community in order to identify areas with the greatest potential for transformative and inclusive development, taking full advantage of the United Nation’s comparative advantage. Consequently, five catalytic development solutions for 2030 materialised, aligned with key areas of the ‘National Development Strategy’ 2021–2030 and the Government Programme 2020–2023, as outlined below.

Priority Area	Expected Outcomes: by 2025...
I. Accountable governance	1. ... all women and men in Kosovo enjoy more accountable, effective, transparent, and gender-responsive institutions at all levels ensuring access to justice, equality and participation for all.
II. Inclusive and non-discriminatory social policies and services	2. ... all girls and boys, women and men, particularly the most marginalised have improved access to and utilize equitable, qualitative, integrated social protection, universal health services and quality education.
III. Resilient, sustainable and inclusive economic development	3. ... women and men in Kosovo, particularly youth and vulnerable groups, have increased access to decent work and benefit from sustainable and inclusive economic development that is more resilient to impacts of climate change, disasters, and emergencies.
IV. Social cohesion	4. ... all communities in Kosovo benefit equitably from inclusive engagement and greater social cohesion.
Cross-cutting: Increased gender equality and rights-holders’ participation, empowerment, and civic engagement	5. ... all women and men in Kosovo, particularly young people, vulnerable groups, and displaced persons, increasingly achieve gender equality and claim their rights and fulfil civic responsibilities.

Implementation of these priorities will be guided by the overarching principles of leaving no one behind (LNOB); a human rights-based approach; gender equality and women's empowerment; resilience; sustainability and accountability. Support from the United Nations Kosovo Team (UNKT) will be focused on the provision of policy advice, technical assistance, capacity development, leveraging partnerships and resources, social mobilisation, brokering know edge, and piloting and scaling up innovations based on evidence.

With a view to ensure an effective, inclusive and transparent implementation of the Cooperation Framework, a Joint Steering Committee will be established, composed of government and UN representatives, co-chaired by the Prime Minister and the United Nations Development Coordinator. Results Groups established in line with the five outcomes, complemented by thematic working groups on gender equality and human rights, will allow for improved coordination, joint programming and integrated policy advice. The annual Results Report will be the key document to review progress, identify resource gaps and foster stronger partnerships in order to achieve targets by 2025. The Cooperation Framework will be evaluated in its penultimate year.

Partnerships will be key to the implementation of this Cooperation Framework and will be guided by shared values and principles as well as commitment to the SDGs and realised through engagement of the United Nations with central and local institutions, line ministries, civil society organizations, regional organizations as well as multilateral and bilateral partners. The Cooperation Framework is also closely aligned with the United Nations Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF) signed with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), linking the United Nations' development cooperation with its peace and security pillar.

Currently, only 51 per cent of Kosovo's development framework is aligned with the SDG targets. Sustained financing and improved data monitoring will allow a more efficient implementation of Kosovo's vision for a better, more sustainable future for all, and will advance progress towards the 2030 Agenda. It is envisaged that the Cooperation Framework will play a key role in supporting Kosovo to achieve the SDG targets and, thereby, during the Decade of Action meet the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

United Nations System Agencies

- FAO** - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
 - ILO** - International Labour Organization
 - IOM** - International Organization for Migration
 - OHCHR** - Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
 - UNDC** - United Nations Development Coordinator
 - UNDCO** - United Nations Development Coordinator's Office
 - UNDG** - United Nations Development Group
 - UNDP** - United Nations Development Programme
 - UNEP** - United Nations Environment Programme
 - UNESCO** - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
 - UNFPA** - United Nations Population Fund
 - UN-Habitat** - United Nations Human Settlements Programme
 - UNHCR** - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
 - UNICEF** - United Nations Children's Fund
 - UNKT** - United Nations Kosovo Team
 - UNMIK** - United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
 - UNODC** - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
 - UNRC** - United Nations Resident Coordinator
 - UNV** - United Nations Volunteers
 - UN Women** - Women United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
 - WB** - World Bank
 - WHO** - World Health Organization
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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Kosovo Institutions

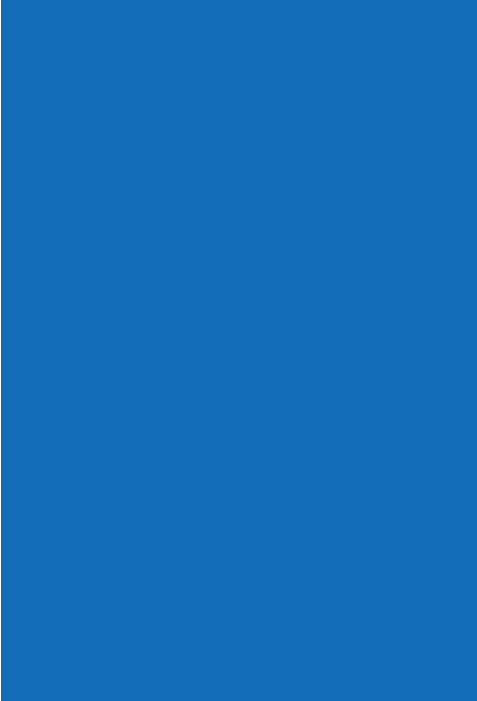
KAS	-	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
MAFRD	-	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development
MCR	-	Ministry of Communities and Returns
MCYS	-	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
MEE	-	Ministry of Economy and Environment
MEM	-	Ministry of Energy and Mining
MES	-	Ministry of Education and Science
MFAD	-	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora
MJ	-	Ministry of Justice
MLSW	-	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MTI	-	Ministry of Trade and Industry
OPM	-	Office of Prime Minister
SPO	-	Strategic Planning Office

Other

ALMP	-	Active Labour Market Policy/Programme
CDP	-	Common Development Plan
CF	-	Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
CKA	-	Common Kosovo Analysis
CO	-	Carbon Dioxide (Greenhouse Gas)
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
ECD/ECE	-	Early Childhood Development/ Education
ERA	-	European Reform Agenda
EU	-	European Union
FACE	-	Fund Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures
FDI	-	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product

Acronyms and Abbreviations

- GEWE** - Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
 - GhG** - Greenhouse Gas
 - HACT** - Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
 - IFI** - International Financial Institutions
 - ISF** - Integrated Strategic Framework
 - JSC** - Joint Steering Committee
 - JWP** - Joint Work (For outcomes in Cooperation Framework)
 - LNOB** - Leaving No One Behind
 - M&E** - Monitoring and Evaluation
 - MEL** - Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
 - MAF** - Management Accountability Framework
 - NCD** - Non-communicable Disease
 - NDS** - 'National Development Strategy'
 - NEET** - Not engaged in Education, Employment or Training
 - NGO** - Non-governmental Organization
 - ODA** - Official Development Assistance
 - OECD** - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
 - OTM** - Operations Management Team
 - OSCE** - Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
 - PISA** - Programme for International Student Assessment
 - PPP** - Purchasing Power Parity
 - RBM** - Results-based Management
 - RG** - Cooperation Framework Outcome Results Groups
 - RIA** - Rapid Integrated Assessment
 - SAA** - Stabilisation and Association Agreement
 - SAS** - Social Assistance Scheme
 - SDGs** - Sustainable Development Goals
 - SERP** - SERP Socio-economic Response Plan
 - UPR** - Universal Periodic Review
 - USAID** - United States Agency for International Development
 - VNR** - Voluntary National Review
 - VR** - Review of Progress toward the SDGs
-



1. PROGRESS TOWARDS 2030 AGENDA

1.1. KOSOVO CONTEXT

Since the end of the conflict in 1999 and developments since 2008, notable progress has been made in support of stability, democratisation, rule of law and governance, and post-conflict economic reconstruction. As integration into the European Union (EU) is a strategic priority and a primary incentive for development and reform in Kosovo, the integration process overwhelmingly endorsed by political and non-political actors, provides a key framework for reforms and inclusive development in Kosovo as well as for accelerated progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and meet the expectations of the global Agenda 2030, evidenced in the unanimous endorsement by the Kosovo Assembly of the Resolution on the SDGs in 2018 and operationalisation of the Sustainable Development Council (SDC).

The EU's annual reports on Kosovo have echoed the need for additional efforts to ensure good governance, support rule of law reforms, and address corruption, organized crime and unemployment. The Security Council remains divided on Kosovo's status and has kept it on its agenda under resolution 1244 (1999). The absence of an agreement on the normalisation of relations between Pristina and Belgrade continues to hinder potential for socioeconomic development, social cohesion and reconciliation. The EU-facilitated Pristina-Belgrade dialogue has helped address some divisive issues, however, political polarisation and mistrust between communities continues.

Internal political instability has been reflected in repeated elections over the past 12 years, with only one of five governments completing its four-year term. Unemployment and lack of social and economic opportunities are among key sources of political and economic disenfranchisement, particularly among youth. The judiciary is still vulnerable and the observed politicisation of the public sector and persistent signs of nepotism continue to pose obstacles to the effectiveness of the civil service.

Kosovo has an advanced legal and policy framework aligned to the EU's *acquis communautaire*. However, implementation is lagging in key areas (governance and rule of law, human rights protection, gender equality and social services), due to the lack of financial and human capacities and as emphasized consistently by the three Reference Groups, the non-systematic approach to broader inclusion of external actors (e.g. Kosovo residents, civil society organizations [CSOs], academia) in different stages of legal and policy drafting and implementation.

Although Kosovo is not a signatory of international treaties and United Nations conventions as a result of its status, its Constitution foresees the direct applicability of several United Nations and regional human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Children, and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). Beyond these constitutional provisions, Kosovo has a wide array of laws and mechanisms for the protection and promotion of human rights, including a 2015 package of basic laws on human rights (law on the ombudsperson, law on gender equality, and law on protection from discrimination). A consolidated human rights strategy is critical to address implementation shortcomings.

Additionally, the Skopje Process on durable solutions for displaced persons from Kosovo will continue supporting institutions – from the region, OSCE and the United Nations – to develop comprehensive protection systems and response capacities with respect to asylum and the risk of statelessness.

The United Nations Western Balkans Action Plan, a system-wide initiative developed in 2019 under the Secretary-General's prevention platform, commits the United Nations Secretariat and agencies, funds and programmes to support the region – including Kosovo – in the areas of dialogue, trust-building and reconciliation through concrete and coherent actions and partnerships at sub-regional, country and local levels. Through the United Nations ISF, the United Nations family in Kosovo has agreed to create closer synergies between the United Nations Kosovo Team and UNMIK, i.e. its development and its peace and security pillars, in the pursuit of mutually agreed objectives in the areas of intercommunity trust-building as well as justice, rule of law and human rights. Progress towards reconciliation is also a key aspect of the EU accession process, which drives reforms in Kosovo.

There are severe deficiencies related to access to and quality of health and education in Kosovo, and the COVID-19 pandemic is exposing and exacerbating these challenges and the weaknesses of the system. Certain categories of women, youth, non-majority communities (particularly Kosovo-Roma, Kosovo-Ashkali and Kosovo-Egyptian communities), migrants, persons with special needs and residents of rural areas are particularly exposed to marginalisation and discrimination, challenges that have deepened due to the pandemic, and with some persons facing compounded layers of vulnerability.

Migration out of Kosovo has a significant impact on the society. Between 2009 and 2018, EU countries issued over 205,000 first residence permits to residents of Kosovo (an increase of 32 per cent from 2017 to 2018). The diaspora, according to the Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS), in proportion to Kosovo population, comprises 21.4 per cent.² Labour migration and interactions with Kosovo's diaspora influence economic opportunities and generate welfare for those remaining in Kosovo through remittances amounting to approximately 15.8 per cent of Kosovo's GDP (around 8 per cent of the sources of individual income in 2017).³ On the other hand, lack of regular labour migration paths and measures may hinder development potential of migration and make migrants more vulnerable to abuses and exploitation.

Kosovo's population is the third poorest in Europe, with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita based on purchasing power parity (PPP) in Kosovo in 2018 at 11,152 USD.⁴ Economic growth over the past decade has not coincided with robust job creation. The labour market is characterised by low employment – with just 28.8 per cent of working-age people (15–64 years) employed – and the widest gender gap in the Western Balkans. In 2019, only 21.1 per cent of women participated in the labour force (compared to 59.7 per cent of men) and unemployment was highest among women (34.4 per cent)⁵.

² *Kosovan Migration*, Kosovo Agency of Statistics, April 2014, Pristina. Find at: <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/1380/kosovan-migration-2014.pdf>

³ *Remittances accounted for about 15.8 per cent of Kosovo's annual GDP in 2019: World Bank. Personal remittances received (% of GDP) – Kosovo. World Bank staff estimates.* <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=XK>. In 2019, Kosovo received 852 million Euros in remittances (Kosovo Central Bank. *Kosovo Economy at a Glance*. 2019. <https://bqk-kos.org/eag/>). According to KAS *Living Standard Statistics 2017*, remittances comprised 8 per cent of sources of individual income in 2017. (Kosovo Agency of Statistics. *Kosovo in Figures 2018*. P. 50. <https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/5128/kosovo-infigures-2018.pdf>)

⁴ World Bank, *GDP Per Capita (PPP)*, accessed on 28 September 2020, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD?end=2018&name_desc=false&start=1990&type=shaded&view=chart

⁵ Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS), *Labour Force Survey in Kosovo 2019*, 2 April 2020, available at: <https://ask.rks.gov.net/en/kosovo-agency-of-statistics/add-news/labour-force-survey-in-kosovo-2019>.

Several systemic barriers have contributed to women's low economic participation including deep-rooted gender stereotypes and rigid understanding of gender roles which have exacerbated women's unpaid care burden and affected women's access to resources, property and assets. Although the average age in Kosovo is 29.5 years, youth unemployment (for those aged 15–24 years) is 49.4 per cent whereas unemployment among women is 60.3 per cent and 44.1 per cent among men.⁶ Most troubling is the rate of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) – 32.7 per cent in 2019 (versus 34.4 per cent of women and 31.4 per cent of men). These high unemployment rates among youth and women undermine Kosovo's potential for economic growth and sustainable development.

A rapid assessment conducted three months into the COVID-19 outbreak in Kosovo found that around 40 per cent of those who were employed were able to retain their jobs but had not worked during the initial lockdown. Eight per cent of the respondents reported job loss due to COVID-19 with the most significant losses experienced in the construction sector (23 per cent) and hospitality sector (14 per cent). Of those impacted, 52 per cent of men and 46 per cent of women experienced reduced income during the initial three months of the pandemic.⁷

As much as 18 per cent of the population lives *below* the absolute consumption *poverty line* (1.85 Euros per day in 2017 prices), with 5.1 per cent in extreme poverty (1.31 Euros per day). Access to health services is unequal and Kosovo generally has poor health outcomes compared to the region, with a life expectancy at birth of 71.6 years. Despite progress in maternal and child health indicators, challenges remain including neonatal deaths. The low quality of education resulted in the poor performance of students in the 2018 OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), placing Kosovo students at the bottom of the developing world and last in the Western Balkans. The academic and vocational systems fail to prepare students for participation in the labour market.

Kosovo faces several environmental challenges, including a changing climate, natural hazards, unsustainable use of natural resources as well as high levels of various pollutants. These affect Kosovo's sustainable development as local institutions have insufficient capacities to manage them effectively.

At the same time, Kosovo suffers from environmental (i.e. air, water, and soil) pollution and the destruction of natural resources, resulting in water scarcity and land contamination. Rapid and uncontrolled urbanisation, loss of agricultural land and unsustainable infrastructure development impact livelihood opportunities and public health – undermining sustainable economic, social and environmental development. Women, non-majority communities, persons with disabilities and children are disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and degradation. Measures to begin addressing these issues are being taken.

Kosovo is in the early stages of developing a sustainable agriculture, eco-tourism and circular economy, and the private sector has played a minimal role in contributing to nature-based solutions due to limited and ineffective public-private partnerships. These efforts must be amplified. Stronger prioritisation of these issues coupled with the development of capacities to tackle environmental challenges and promote sustainable use of natural resources in a comprehensive manner are required at both central and local levels. Gender perspectives should also be taken into consideration, with specific attention to the impact of climate change and environmental hazards on women and girls.

⁶ *Idem*

⁷ *Rapid Socio-Economic impact assessment of COVID-19 in Kosovo, available at <https://www.ks.undp.org/content/kosovo/en/home/library/poverty/rapid-socio-economic-impact-assessment-of-covid-19-in-kosovo.html>.*

For Kosovo, the generation of data, notably the availability of reliable and accurate disaggregated data, remains a challenge due to a lack of collection mechanisms and of central repository for monitoring; weak coordination; and insufficient human and financial resources to support evidence-based policy development. Shortcomings in data collection weaken evidence-based policymaking and impede acceleration of progress towards SDGs and the measurement of policy impact.

The CKA revealed however notable progress in the capacity of the Kosovo Agency of Statistics for collection, analysis, dissemination of disaggregated data; however, improving exchange among various entities and increasing data utilisation in policy development should be strengthened.

1.2 KOSOVO'S VISION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Kosovo is committed to pursue a stable macroeconomic environment, inclusive growth and a functioning rule of law as prerequisites for EU integration. Kosovo's commitment to the global 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (hereafter 2030 Agenda) as part of its long-term development plan is evidenced by the unanimous endorsement of the Kosovo Assembly resolution on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2018 and operationalisation of the SDG Council to monitor and ensure implementation of the SDGs at both central and local level.

The 'National Development Strategy' (NDS)⁸ 2016–2021 is the axis of orientation in Kosovo's policy framework, outlining priorities and integrating sectoral strategies in four pillars: human capital; good governance and rule of law; competitive industries; and infrastructure. The current NDS lacks reflection on health and environmental considerations and lacks alignment with the 17 SDGs set out in the 2030 Agenda. In 2019, the United Nations Kosovo Team (UNKT) conducted a rapid integrated assessment (RIA) of 46 central and sectoral development planning strategies and found Kosovo's development framework was aligned, or partially aligned, with 51 percent of the SDG targets (87 of 169 targets). As the current NDS nears its end, it is being reviewed and revised in preparation for the next NDS 2021–2030, which not only covers the duration of the Cooperation Framework but also the 10-year timeframe which coincides with the SDG Decade of Action. This represents an opportunity for joint priority setting and integrated policy making as well as for fully anchoring the new NDS around the SDGs with clear ambition to fulfilling the 2030 Agenda. As such, the results and lessons learned of this Cooperation Framework will feed into the implementation of the upcoming NDS and also subsequently inform future United Nations development system cooperation in Kosovo. Similarly, both this and successive Cooperation Frameworks will continue and reinforce the trajectory drawn by the upcoming NDS.

With Kosovo as a potential candidate for EU membership, a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA)⁹ with the EU has been in force since April 2016, providing a key framework for reforms and development. As a first step towards integration, the SAA requires alignment with applicable EU standards through social, economic and political reforms aimed at improving conditions in Kosovo. The Economic Reform Programme (ERP) sets government priorities to help ensure fulfilment of the SAA obligations with the EU and is approved by the government annually. Priority reforms are also operationalised through the European Reform Agenda (ERA), measures that will help accelerate progress towards the SDGs. Overall, it is widely recognised that the objectives of the European integration priorities and Agenda 2030, are based on

⁸ NDS 2016–2021, available at: http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/repository/docs/National_Development_Strategy_2016-2021_ENG.pdf

⁹ The SAA is available at: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10728-2015-REV-1/en/pdf>

shared values of human rights and human dignity and hence are mutually reinforcing. Consequently, the implementation of the Cooperation Framework will explore synergies in areas of gender equality, quality education for all, green and inclusive economic development, and reconciliation and social cohesion with focus on youth.

2. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO THE 2030 AGENDA

2.1 FROM COMMON KOSOVO ANALYSIS TO COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is strongly anchored around the pledge of leaving no one behind (LNOB). However, the Common Kosovo Analysis (CKA) undertaken from the end of 2019 though the first half of 2020 has revealed widespread discrimination and inequality in policy, programme and social norms resulting in certain groups being left furthest behind. According to the RIA of May 2019, certain categories of women (non-majority; rural; single mothers; domestic violence survivors); children (economically deprived; living with disabilities); non-majority communities (particularly Kosovo-Roma; Kosovo-Ashkali; Kosovo-Egyptian as well as others in certain circumstances); people living with disabilities and people on the move (migrants, asylum seekers; refugees; IDPs and need for durable solution; voluntary returnees); and persons facing discrimination and hostility on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity (LGBTIQ persons) are most left behind or at risk of being left behind in Kosovo.¹⁰

At the intersection of factors related to discrimination, geography, vulnerability to shocks, governance and socioeconomic status, certain groups of people face multiple, reinforcing sources of deprivation and inequalities, making them more likely to be left behind across multiple dimensions of well-being.

Poverty has a higher adverse effect on children, youth, and women. Gender discrimination, patriarchal norms and harmful traditions hinder women's access to economic, political, and social opportunities, impacting women and girls from non-majority communities, victims of sexual and gender-based violence, older women, migrant women, and women with disabilities the most.

Persons with disabilities, in particular children, remain excluded with poor access to public spaces, education and health services. Persons with disabilities also face hindered access to employment and livelihood opportunities.

Non-majority communities, especially Kosovo-Roma, Kosovo-Ashkali and Kosovo-Egyptian communities, face disproportionately higher rates of mortality and malnutrition, late birth registration and lack of documents, less access to education and employment, and more violence. Their increased vulnerability is, in part, due to limited implementation of language legislation.

¹⁰ See Annex 3. *The Status of Vulnerable Groups in Kosovo*

Migrants, internally displaced persons and returnees are considerably disadvantaged in their access to opportunities and more vulnerable to shocks.

Rural residents, especially those from mountainous settlements, have limited or no access to communication means and unequal access to public utilities, higher rates of poverty and extreme poverty and are more vulnerable to environmental risks, including climate change.

Climate change compounds existing vulnerabilities due to limited prioritisation to tackle it, and capacity to mitigate greenhouse gases and adapt to the changing climate. Changes foreseen in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including floods and drought, pose risks to livelihoods and further increase inequities.

Kosovo's commitment to the 2030 Agenda was evidenced in the unanimous endorsement by the Kosovo Assembly of the Resolution on the SDGs (2018) and operationalisation of the Sustainable Development Council (SDC). As Kosovo is not a United Nations member state, there are limited global incentives to prioritise achievement of the SDGs, resulting in a lack of related integrated public financing for the SDGs. As Kosovo is similarly not eligible for the Voluntary National Review (VNR), it cannot report in the context of the United Nations mechanisms on its progress with respect to social policy, market transformations, environmental protection, governance and social cohesion, a consequence of which is the lack of prioritisation of monitoring and the related absence of reliable and internationally comparable data to inform policy and decision-making in Kosovo. Limited data coupled with the slow uptake of monitoring tasks by Kosovo's SDC makes it difficult to obtain a detailed review of Kosovo's progress by SDG.

A UNKT data mapping exercise revealed data on 33 per cent of the SDG global indicators, no data on 42 per cent, and 25 per cent irrelevant to the Kosovo context. When analysed by SDG, there is almost no data available for SDGs 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 and significant data gaps for SDGs 2, 6, 9, and 15. Data is not routinely collected, lacks time series for comparison, and is rarely disaggregated, hindering identification of equity gaps. Not only is Kosovo's development framework lacking alignment with half of its SDG targets, implementation of development strategies aligned with the SDGs is hampered by a lack of adequate financing for planned activities and a lack of data to monitor progress or trends.

One of the limitations to monitor progress of SDG implementation is that international sources often lack or exclude data on Kosovo due its status under UNSCR 1244; however, the World Bank's SDG Atlas presents data from the World Development Indicators and offers some data, albeit not official indicators for SDG monitoring on Kosovo¹¹, and EUROSTAT's SDG indicators for Enlargement Countries¹² tracks the progress of Kosovo and six EU enlargement countries, regarding SDGs 1 (no poverty), 3 (good health), 7 (energy), 8 (decent work) and 17 (partnerships).

2.2 GAPS AND CHALLENGES

Despite important progress evidenced, the CKA consultation process revealed several root causes outlined below, which significantly hamper progress towards sustainable development and which require a system-wide approach to address them.

¹¹ The World Development Indicators for the SDGs are available at: <http://datatopics.worldbank.org/sdgs/>.

¹² EUROSTAT, *Enlargement countries – indicators for Sustainable Development Goals, February 2020*, available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/56211.pdf>.

- **Lack of accountability:**

Limited implementation of laws, and lack of transparency, accountability, and information-sharing are barriers to development as they reduce public safety, hinder quality of and access to services, increase corruption, render institutions less inclusive and deter investments. Certain groups are disadvantaged due to language barriers or insufficient protection offered by laws or policies or hindered access to governance institutions or opportunities to be heard. Corruption, whereby services are limited to those with affluence, status, or connections, is one reason, and it weakens accountability mechanisms and performance of public institutions. Only 22 per cent of residents consider public employment to be based on merit.¹³ These institutional challenges impact all of Kosovo's residents but affect most those groups that are left behind or at risk of being left behind. Women remain underrepresented in leadership positions in central and local government institutions, despite the law on general elections requiring that at least 30 per cent of all candidates for public elections be women, while the 2004 law on gender equality requires special measures to strive for equal (50 per cent) gender representation in public institutions, although the latter has never been enforced. Access to justice for vulnerable categories (non-majority communities, women and girls, survivors of gender-based violence, survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, children, displaced persons, persons with disabilities) is hindered by the lack of information among rights-holders of the responsibilities of institutions to provide timely and adequate services.

- **Unequal and limited access to, and quality of, health and social services:**

If limited, the capacities and resources of social services can contribute to inequities and increase vulnerabilities, particularly for the most excluded groups. While overall spending on the Social Assistance Scheme (SAS) has increased over the past decade, relative spending has declined¹⁴, and it is not designed to support the poor or most vulnerable. Social services lack sustainable funding and are often low quality and not linked to other sectors for social inclusion. Kosovo's health system is predominantly tax-funded; however, private out-of-pocket payments make up a significant share of contributions, leaving the most vulnerable and exposed groups disproportionately affected. Further, service quality and gender responsiveness are weak for certain categories (e.g. women and girls with disabilities), as health professionals are rarely educated on how to provide care to them. Distrust in Kosovo institutions and social prejudices reduce access to services for non-majority communities. Rural areas face deficiencies, particularly in infrastructure. Poverty and insufficient knowledge of rights limit access for children, older people and people with disabilities as well as migrants.

- **Insufficient skills development as an impediment to both development and social inclusion:**

The education system fails to provide youth with skills to meet the demands of the local and global market hindering their independence, further excluding those who are vulnerable, and contributing to political and economic disenfranchisement. Demonstrative of the education needs, Kosovo's poor academic ranking in the PISA tests is a result of poor teacher performance, lack of sufficient budget for teacher training, inappropriate teaching materials for the new curriculum and lack of quality assurance mechanisms. Although attendance at the

¹³ Public Pulse XVI, available at: https://www.ks.undp.org/content/kosovo/en/home/library/democratic_governance/public-pulse-xvi.html.

¹⁴ UNICEF, *Analysis of the Situation of Women and Children in Kosovo*, 2019.

pre-primary level (5–6 years of age) increased to 92 per cent, attendance of children aged 4–5 years in early childhood education (ECE) programmes is only 14 per cent, caused by an absence of an ECE expansion policy, low government investment, and insufficient private sector integration. In addition, access to education is limited among non-majority communities, in particular the Kosovo-Roma, Kosovo-Ashkali and Kosovo-Egyptian communities, especially for girls, which is attributed, in part, to: child marriages, associated primarily with Kosovo-Roma, Kosovo-Ashkali, Kosovo-Egyptian, and Kosovo-Gorani ethnic groups and rural areas; hazardous and exploitive child labour; discrimination in schools; security concerns; insufficient financial resources; household obligations, favouring the education of sons over daughters; and language barriers. Poor quality of secondary education is the key contributor to a mismatch between the demands of the labour market and outputs of the education system. Students lack modern skills and experience in the workplace. There is an opportunity to increase technology use in the classroom and align teaching methods with global standards.

- **Low level of economic competitiveness and use of green economy:**

Kosovo's economy needs more and larger companies, vibrant SMEs (led also by an increased number of women) and a business environment that allows for growth and expansion of output, employment, and exports. Non-tradable sectors continue to dominate output, mostly services (54 per cent of GDP, 2009–2017). Industry is small by regional standards at 17.5 per cent of GDP, of which manufacturing is 11 per cent. High corruption, poor contract enforcement, red tape, and weak infrastructure (particularly unreliable electricity supply) are seen as factors that discourage private investments, leading to the lowest foreign direct investment (FDI) levels in the region. The economic contribution of the diaspora is predominantly financial (remittances, savings, investments) and human capital related. Despite the growing awareness among institutions of the importance of diaspora engagement, targeted measures are needed to use the diaspora as a catalyst for accelerated growth and improved inclusion. Although Kosovo possesses strategic documents in relation to diaspora engagement, it lacks intra-institutional coordination and relevant whole-of-government incentives to support a more robust diaspora engagement, in achieving sustainable development, especially at the local level.

- **Social trust deficit:**

Unresolved issues from the past conflicts, coupled with cultural and political barriers, impede the return of displaced persons, integration and collaboration across ethnic lines and they also contribute to the pervasive disenfranchisement of youth. The limited implementation of legal guarantees meant to protect the rights and interests of non-majority communities perpetuate the polarisation within Kosovo and mistrust among ethnic groups, fueled by divisive political narratives in public discourse. This disunity both results from, and contributes to, divisive political rhetoric and hate speech as well as stagnation of the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue towards the normalisation of relations. Inclusiveness and dialogue within and between communities and political leaders would help renew trust, foster reconciliation, and contribute to policies and practices that are reflective of, and responsive to, all. The active engagement and leadership of women and marginalised groups in government structures, leadership roles and decision-making processes is critical but currently limited. Increased progress on this would help Kosovo adhere to its commitments related to Women, Peace and Security (WPS), including United Nations Security Council resolution 1325. With respect to child protection, in July 2019, Kosovo adopted the law on child protection, which aimed to ensure a well-coordinated government system of child protection to improve the prevention of, and response to, all forms of violence and exploitation against boys and girls.

- **Limited political resolve to work on environmental protection:**

Kosovo relies heavily on energy production from coal using outdated technology which contributes to environmental hazards, particularly air pollution. Kosovo also faces a high risk of biodiversity degradation due to extensive deforestation resulting from illegal logging and inadequate capacities to address it and other illegal activities (hunting, uncontrolled urbanisation, lack of spatial planning, etc.), as well as weak municipal capacities and central government policies⁹ to protect nature. The integration of environmental and climate considerations into development plans, sectoral policies and legislation remains largely symbolic. While the institutional structure has been robust on assessing risks linked to natural and human-made hazards, response to them has not been effective. Spatial planning and development processes (including land management) need to be better aligned with environmental protection measures, efficient use of resources, transportation planning, infrastructure and service management, affordable housing, cultural and natural heritage, economic development, rural and regional development, disaster risk reduction, and resilience and climate action. As Kosovo is neither party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) nor the Paris Agreement, it lacks a cohesive and a realistic plan on how to deal with the impacts, risks and opportunities around combatting climate change. This may prove to be a barrier to EU accession as the continent aims to become carbon neutral by 2050.

If climate is not given higher political priority, Kosovo will risk missing out on the opportunities that would be available in the context of the EU Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. These factors also risk leaving Kosovo behind the rest of the world in sustainable development and with regard to significant financing for environmentally sustainable economic development. In addition, there is a need to analyse existing gender differentials further in all preparedness and response activities to ensure that both women and men's needs are considered and integrated into planning and to ensure that women and men meaningfully participate in disaster risk management processes and bodies.

Human mobility, in its different forms (e.g. disaster induced displacement, labour migration, planned relocation), is and will continue to be shaped by natural hazards and environmental degradation. At the global level, the role of migration in the environmental and climate action is anchored in several key policies and processes such as the UNFCCC, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, SDGs and Global Compact for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration. However, there is limited integration of human mobility and environment nexus in the programming on climate change, air pollution and environment in Kosovo as well as that of climate change, air pollution and environment in the programming on migration.¹⁵

¹⁵ 21st Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC in Paris established the Task Force on Displacement (TFD) to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change. The TFD recommendations invite parties to facilitate "orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration" (1.g.vi) and enhance opportunities for regular migration pathways in the context of climate change; The Sendai Framework suggests that as part of a broader and a more people-centred preventive approach to disaster risk the governments will have to engage relevant stakeholders, including migrants, in the design and implementation of policies, plans, and standard. This framework acknowledges that knowledge, skills, and capacities of migrants could be useful in the design and implementation of DRR, which contributes to the resilience of communities and societies. The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration has 23 objectives, including a section specifically dedicated to "Natural disasters, the adverse effects of climate change, and environmental degradation" (paragraphs 18.h-18.l) under Objective 2: Minimizing the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin.

- **Lack of qualitative, timely and disaggregated data:**

The lack of reliable data to set SDG baselines and track progress makes it difficult to monitor achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Data disaggregated (by sex, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, employment and place of residence) generated and confirmed in close collaboration with the relevant government entities is essential and one of the prerequisites for effective planning, for measuring progress in ensuring that “no one is left behind” and for contributing to reforms aimed at eliminating discrimination and fostering equal outcomes for all.

2.3 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

The formulation of the priority areas was informed by the CKA and the 2019 independent evaluation of United Nations Common Development Plan (CDP) 2016–2020.¹⁶ The CDP evaluation revealed important lessons learned: There should be an explicit Theory of Change informed by the forthcoming CKA and based on SDGs, underlying all the necessary assumptions for inclusive sustainable development and principles of LNOB, in order to assist the government and partners in linking their priorities to SDGs, zoom in on a smaller number of core priorities, and provide an opportunity for joint initiatives, the Results Groups should play a more important role in strengthening inter-agency technical cooperation and also with the Kosovo Institutions counterparts; and UNKT should communicate and advocate more effectively on its work and to bring about behavioural change.

The participatory strategic prioritisation and consultation process with the reference groups as part of the CDP evaluation, as well as with reference and focus groups as part of the CKA, led to the identification and prioritisation of the development challenges and opportunities anchored around the United Nations value proposition, the guiding principles of LNOB, human rights-based approach, gender equality and women’s empowerment, resilience, sustainability and accountability. The prioritisation of challenges and opportunities was carried out in two streams: an internal strategic prioritisation retreat was carried out in November 2019 to gauge the United Nations comparative advantage comprising the United Nations mandate, capacity and positioning in different thematic areas; and the second stream included consultations carried out during 2019 and 2020 with the reference and focus groups with the participation of over 400 participants which included the government, civil society, the private sector, academia, groups and representatives of the groups left behind. The feedback received from the consultations is an integral part of the Cooperation Framework.

The priority areas and outcomes were identified in a Strategic Prioritisation Retreat carried out in March 2020 with the participation of the Prime Minister, line ministries, other relevant Kosovo institutions, United Nations development system entities, civil society, including women rights organizations, the private sector, academia and international partners, and validated in a meeting with the Prime Minister in October 2020.

Informed by the strategic prioritisation and based on lessons learned and the evaluation of earlier engagement of the United Nations in Kosovo, the UNKT has set out four priority areas to

¹⁶ The CDP was akin to the system-wide United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, which preceded the Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks prior to the United Nations development reforms.

guide its cooperation in Kosovo for the next five years based on UNKT comparative advantages – normative mandates, positioning and technical capacity: (1) accountable governance; (2) inclusive and non-discriminatory social policies and services; (3) resilient, sustainable and inclusive economic development; and (4) social cohesion. Relevant to each of these priority areas is a crosscutting theme (increased gender equality and rights-holders' participation, empowerment, and civic engagement) and five outcomes, defined below. The intended development results will contribute to achievement of several SDG outcome indicators and targets. Additionally, a set of higher-level outcome indicators have been chosen to measure UNKT cooperation results in Kosovo within the framework of the 2030 Agenda whereas impact level indicators will be measured through the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan. These outcome indicators (Annex 1) along with output and impact level indicators will be monitored periodically by UNKT agencies and stakeholders.

Kosovo receives substantial Official Development Assistance (ODA) from many partners in support of the development agenda. Building upon its comparative advantage, UNKT's focus will be in areas related to the agency-specific mandate strongly anchored around the achievement of the SDGs.

- **PRIORITY AREA 1: Accountable governance**

Ensure that public institutions at all levels are more transparent, meritocratic, inclusive, gender-responsive capable and effective in designing public policies, administering services, holding those in power accountable, delivering justice and ensuring equality and participation for all.

- **PRIORITY AREA 2: Inclusive and non-discriminatory social policies and services**

Ensure that social services such as healthcare, education and social protection services are more accessible, qualitative, and effective, especially for vulnerable groups and excluded groups.

- **PRIORITY AREA 3: Resilient, sustainable and inclusive economic development**

Ensure that economic development is associated with policies aiming to promote environmental sustainability and mitigate adverse impacts on the environment, green business practices that are more environmentally sustainable and resilient, as well as labour markets that are more inclusive and respective of gender equality and human rights.

- **PRIORITY AREA 4: Social cohesion**

Ensure that economic development is associated with policies aiming to promote environmental sustainability and mitigate adverse impacts on the environment, green business practices that are more environmentally sustainable and resilient, as well as labour markets that are more inclusive and respective of gender equality and human rights.

- **CROSS-CUTTING THEME: Increased gender equality and rights-holders' participation, empowerment, and civic engagement**

Ensure all women and men in Kosovo, particularly young people, vulnerable groups, communities, and displaced persons increasingly claim their rights and fulfil civic responsibilities.

2.4 THEORY OF CHANGE FOR COOPERATION FRAMEWORK PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE 2030 AGENDA

The theory of change for the Cooperation Framework (Figure 1 below) envisions that Kosovo will make significant progress by 2025 towards achievement of the Kosovo goals of the NDS aligned with the SDGs (impact-level change) with support of the United Nations development system for four priority areas and one cross-cutting theme.

These priorities represent the greatest importance to sustainable development in Kosovo. It is only by making significant progress in each priority area and cross-cutting theme guided by the principles of human rights, gender equality, and LNOB, that the SDGs will be achieved.

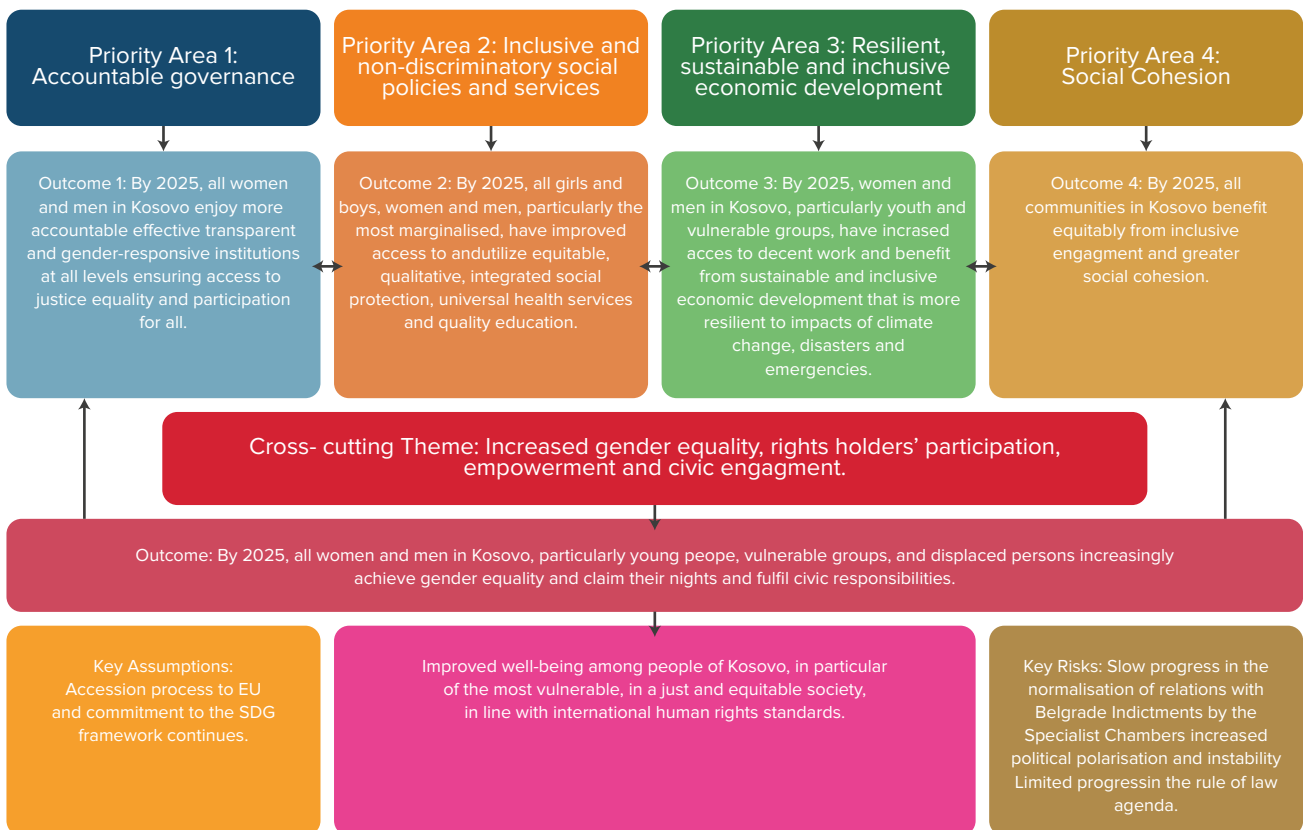


Figure 1 Cooperation Framework Theory of Change

By 2030, achievement of Kosovo's development objectives and its contributions to the achievement of SDG targets depends upon whether people and institutions are enabled to both contribute to, and benefit from, a path towards sustainable development. The achievement of this goal will depend on Kosovo's commitment to: foster trustworthy, inclusive, gender-responsive and effective public institutions; protect and empower excluded and vulnerable groups; ensure that economic development includes rural areas and produces more jobs, with a focus on green jobs, and better working conditions; promote environmental sustainability and reduce adverse effects on the environment; and build resilience to agriculture production and climate change, disaster and emergencies and increase social cohesion. Rural development requires integrated approaches that build on the potential of communities and value chain analyses, while effectively utilizing development financing to leverage financing from other sources to strengthen rural economy, increase jobs and allow for the development of nature-based solutions (e.g. through ecotourism, sustainable agricultural production and processing).

In situations where social relationships are already strained by persisting (real or perceived) inequalities, and economic and social conditions deteriorate or do not provide equitable development for all, policy responses must not only be just, fair, and equal for all, they must also be understood as such by all. Policies and interventions should seek to address the diverse needs of women, children and youth, minority communities, people with disabilities and people on the move. The perceived effectiveness of institutional response to the needs of all increases trust in the governing structures. This is expected to intensify focus on increasing government accountability, transparency and meritocracy with the aim to shift the institutional culture and way of working while also increasing public trust and cohesion, ensuring greater inclusiveness and a more sustainable business environment, and mobilising additional resources across a broader range of public and private networks growth. Digitizing public service delivery to increase efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency is underway; however, these efforts are uncoordinated and siloed, suffering from a lack of comprehensive e-governance strategy and the lack of body that coordinates efforts to digitalise government services.

A more sustainable business environment alongside improved rule of law, coupled with targeted economic, environmental and education policies will help produce more sustainable outcomes in the labour market, reduce adverse effects on the environment and build resilience to climate change. The biggest contributor to greenhouse gases in Kosovo is the energy sector. Electricity generation is almost fully dependent on lignite (97 per cent) and outdated technologies. To mitigate emissions, the economy should significantly increase the use of renewable energy sources for electricity production, enhance energy efficiency, and improve spatial planning. In parallel, increased government accountability coupled with increased gender equality, greater empowerment of rights-holders and greater resources generated from more inclusive growth in turn, is also projected to improve inclusiveness and non-discriminatory social policies as well as services in health, education, and social protection. Advancing gender equality and ensuring the protection of particular groups (children, people with disabilities) is central to this cooperation as is strengthening the capabilities of rights-holders through increased focus on their health and education outcomes or through support towards the engagement and empowerment of these groups as agents of change and contributors to Kosovo's development.

At the community level, emphasis will be placed on strengthening social cohesion by improving levels of trust, interaction, and cooperation across majority and non-majority ethnic groups in Kosovo and ensuring equitable access to public services which, in turn, will amplify effects at the institutional level by increasing accountability and inclusiveness in service delivery and decision-making processes and through inclusive economic development by generating outcomes that are all-encompassing in the labour market.

In addition to focusing on the empowerment of rights-holders and strengthening social cohesion at the community level, United Nations agencies will support institutions directly at all levels with respect to policy development, innovative tools and capacity development to enhance transparency, integrity and effectiveness and to improve access to and utilize equitable, qualitative, integrated social protection, universal health services and quality education.

This work can be effective and would be reinforced if other key assumptions continue to hold true. One such assumption is that Kosovo continues to show commitment to the SDG framework and advances Kosovo-wide and local-level mechanisms for implementation. Furthermore, Kosovo must continue to adhere to international human rights standards and mechanisms. Full application of the conventions enshrined in the Constitution and the basic laws on human rights adopted in 2015 is key for the effective implementation of the human rights framework in Kosovo and requires resources and unfaltering capacity-building efforts.

At the same time, these efforts could be jeopardised if progress in the normalisation of relations with Belgrade remains slow, if there is increased political polarisation and instability that is not solely due to indictments by the Kosovo Specialist Chambers, and if there is limited progress in the rule of law agenda.

Finally, the effective management of the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery efforts will be crucial to Kosovo's achievement of sustainable development. With this in mind, the UNKT Socio-Economic Response Plan to COVID-19 (SERP) aims to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic and 14 to offer a comprehensive framework for United Nations efforts to save lives, protect people and build back better. Developed concurrently with the CKA and based on rapid assessments that likewise have been integrated into the CKA, the SERP laid the foundations for the formulation of Cooperation Framework outcomes and is an integral part of the Cooperation Framework through JWPs, regular monitoring and reporting. Its implementation is anchored around those left behind and most affected by the pandemic, and it offers opportunities to build back better and to build resilience in all programmatic interventions over the next 24 months.

2.5 COOPERATION FRAMEWORK OUTCOMES AND PARTNERSHIPS

• PRIORITY AREA 1: Accountable governance

Outcome 1. *By 2025, all women and men in Kosovo enjoy more accountable, effective, transparent, and gender-responsive institutions at all levels ensuring access to justice, equality and participation for all.*

Theory of change. The Cooperation Framework will contribute to an increased focus on ensuring that governing institutions are more responsive, transparent, and accountable to the rule of law and its people. While incentives for Kosovo's governance reforms will be driven by the EU accession process, particularly commitments as part of the SAA with the EU, operational documents (e.g. the ERA) and demands for accountability made by civil society and rights-holders, the Cooperation Framework will support Kosovo institutions to engage in such institutional-level reforms.

More specifically, the Cooperation Framework will focus on addressing the (human, organizational and procedural) capacity development needs, developing and implementing innovative tools and promoting evidence-based policy and legal frameworks. The United Nations system will also contribute to advancing efforts for public administration reform and e-governance in accordance with EU accession criteria, as a means to address nepotistic, informal and ineffective practices in public administration. Furthermore, the United Nations system will support efforts to make institutions more gender-responsive and increase the active engagement of women in public institutions and decision-making processes.

Increased incentives coupled with advanced capacities, tools and policies in these areas will help lead to: more accountable, effective, transparent institutions (measured by greater satisfaction of the population with Kosovo institutions and their inclusiveness in decision-making processes – Approximate SDG 16.6.2 and 16.7.2); greater access to justice especially for juveniles (measured by the growing number of vulnerable people who benefit from free legal aid – Approximate SDG 16.3, 16.9); more effective judicial, prosecutorial, law-enforcement and other relevant anti-corruption institutions (measured by the increased value of criminal assets frozen, seized and confiscated and the Corruption Perception Index – Approximate SDG 16.4 and SDG 16.5.1); and more gender-responsive institutions (measured by the growing proportion of women in decision-making positions at both central and local levels – SDG 5.5.1).

Contributing United Nations entities:



● **PRIORITY AREA 2: Inclusive and non-discriminatory social services and policies**

Outcome 2. *By 2025, all girls and boys, women and men, particularly the most marginalised have improved access to and utilize equitable, qualitative, integrated social protection, universal health services and quality education.*

Theory of change. The Cooperation Framework will support Kosovo institutions to deliver more equitable and qualitative social services that enable and empower residents to improve their knowledge and skills and, benefit from economic development. Ensuring that the basic needs of those being left behind (children, youth, women from rural and forest-dependent communities, women in reproductive age, survivors of gender-based and conflict-related violence, people with disabilities, older people, non-majority communities, migrants and displaced persons) are met, that their health and education outcomes are improved, and that the conditions for them to become more integrated and engaged are created will help foster achievement of this objective.

The latter is essential to economic success and human development as well as to the experience of more fulfilling lives for those who have been left behind. To this end, the United Nations system will support institutional reforms and policies to advance achievement of universal health coverage (SDG 3.8.1), access to safe, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines (Approximate SDG 3.b.1. and SDG 3.b.3), and capacity-building support to increase access to quality health care services and enable better treatment of certain groups (i.e. parents and children through maternal and childcare home visits; women in reproductive age through effective perinatal care, family planning and cervical and breast cancer screenings; older persons through a life-cycle approach).

Under this outcome, the United Nations system will also support Kosovo institutions to detect and respond to health emergencies, including COVID-19, more effectively (Approximate SDG 3.d). In education, the comparative advantages and efforts of the United Nations system will focus on early childhood development in order to ensure a longer-term impact on education, with a focus on primary and secondary education (increased enrolments in early childhood education programmes – SDG 4.2) as well as on health outcomes. This will be achieved through policy and technical capacity support to education and health institutions, including at the local levels.

Additionally, a special focus will be placed on strengthening the education system to provide inclusive and quality education on relevant skills for work and life among adolescents in order to ensure that adolescents are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for the labour market and that they become social change agents (increased engagement of adolescents and youth in education, training and enrollment – SDG 8.6.1 and improved quality of education as measured by PISA tests organized by OECD – SDG 4.1.1).

Resources resulting from economic growth, increased awareness among rights-holders on

access to qualitative education and health services, and key advancements in the policies and capacities of institutions at both central and local levels is expected to facilitate improvements in health (as highlighted above) and educational outcomes. Finally, the United Nations system will support the effectiveness and reach of social protection schemes to target the most impacted. To this end, at the institutional level, the Cooperation Framework will focus on improving links between protection services and advancing integrated social protection mechanisms and services with initial focus on tangible improvements in services and support provided to domestic violence survivors and stranded migrants (Approximate SDG 10.7).

Contributing United Nations entities:



• **PRIORITY AREA 3: Resilient, sustainable, and inclusive economic development**

Outcome 3. *By 2025, women and men in Kosovo, particularly youth and vulnerable groups, have increased access to decent work and benefit from sustainable and inclusive economic development that is more resilient to impacts of climate change, disasters, and emergencies.*

Theory of change. The Cooperation Framework will support Kosovo institutions and the private sector in their efforts to ensure economic development in rural and urban areas that produces more green jobs with decent working conditions, promotes environmentally-friendly development and sustainable use of natural resources and built environment, and is resilient to climate change, disasters, and emergencies. The United Nations system will ensure that development is environmentally, socially, economically and environmentally sustainable, more inclusive and associated with increased job creation (particularly in the private sector, benefiting youth, women and other vulnerable groups) and with more decent working conditions and income generation.

To this end, the Cooperation Framework will support efforts to increase the participation of persons who have been largely excluded from the labour force, particularly for women and youth.

Critically, the United Nations system will support policy and regulatory efforts to reduce informality, work-related injuries and fatalities, and child labour. The Cooperation Framework will support Kosovo institutions (such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Public Employment Service, Labour Inspectorate) and the private sector to develop knowledge, policies and systems for labour market management.

The Cooperation Framework will support efforts to diversify rural economy, promote sustainable use of land and other natural resources, biodiversity protection, increased agri-food production and open new market opportunities – SDG 2.3.2, 15.2.1 and 15.3.1.

Environmentally sustainable economic growth coupled with increased quality of education, improved policies and capacities in labour market management and addressing root causes of women’s low economic participation – both in the private and the public sectors – is expected to create more decent job opportunities especially to youth and women (measured by the proportion of youth not in education, employment and training – SDG 8.6.1 and unemployment rates for youth and women – SDG 8.5.2, by proportion of women-led businesses – SDG 5.a.1 (b) and the level of compliance with basic labour rights – SDG 8.8.2 and SDG 8.7.1 on child labour).

The United Nations system will seek to address key structural barriers (including discriminatory gender norms, rigid understanding of gender roles and unequal distribution of care and domestic work), which have sustained women’s low labour force participation – SDG 5.4.1 – as well as the percentage of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work (by sex, age and location) in order to reduce the disproportionate care burden. This will be an important focus of this outcome which will be complemented by priority area under Outcome 5.

Within this outcome, the United Nations system will also support Kosovo institutions in economic recovery efforts from COVID-19 that will be directed to: strengthen adaptive capacities of existing businesses in rural and urban areas and promote establishment of new micro-, small enterprises and self-employment opportunities; identify new sources of growth, which must be green and inclusive; and change the service delivery models for key sectors through digitization and increased efficiency, with the aim to restore and expand the economic participation of groups left behind.

By helping increase the employability of the workforce and improving work conditions, the United Nations system will also help address key drivers of migration. At the same time, it will engage in enhancing migration governance, which is vital to maximise the potential of migration and achieve sustainable development outcomes for migrants and societies alike – SDG 10.7 and 8.8. Supportive regulatory mechanisms, innovative financial mechanisms, improved institutional coordination, customised information campaigns and access to capacity development and advisory services could help migrants, diaspora members and remittance-recipients to support planned and autonomous initiatives on clean energy, sustainable building and renovation, circular economy and climate-resilient agriculture.

This Cooperation Framework will support the Kosovo institutions to develop and strengthen evidencebased and coordinated policy making and implementation as well as strengthened legislative framework in addressing issues of high levels of air pollution, natural resource degradation and the mitigation of climate change impact and disasters.

To ensure systematic growth, the United Nations system will work with multiple stakeholders, foster public private partnerships, and support communities to adopt and develop nature-based economic activities and production practices (initially in the agro-rural sector and tourism) that are more sustainable and resilient while also supporting institutions at the central and local levels to strengthen and develop policies and practices that address climate change, disaster resilience, spatial planning, and natural resource management in order to reduce the adverse effects of environmental degradation. Growing awareness of air pollution (and its effects on health and environment) and the potential impacts of climate change and natural and human-induced disasters, together with requirements of the EU accession process are likely to contribute to behavioural changes within institutions, the private sector and individuals which, in turn, could promote economic growth that uses natural resources in a sustainable manner and leads to reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (SDG 13.2.1) and air pollution (SDG 11.6.2) and progress towards sustainable forest management (SDG 15.2.1), better environmental management at the local level and more sustainable communities (Approximate SDG 11.A.1).

Contributing United Nations entities:



• PRIORITY AREA 4: Social cohesion

Outcome 4. *By 2025, all communities in Kosovo, benefit equitably from inclusive engagement and greater social cohesion.*

Theory of change. The Cooperation Framework will contribute to an advanced dialogue between institutions, civil society, and individual groups in order to address sources of mistrust and disenfranchisement, as a means to ensure greater social cohesion. Greater social inclusion and more equitable social services will contribute to greater social cohesion. The United Nations system will use its comparative advantages and unique positioning as an impartial, non-partisan actor to support improvements in inter-ethnic relations, strengthen inter-community dialogue, and ensure the protection of interests of non-majority communities, while addressing the sources of divisive historical and political narratives that feed mistrust into future generations.

To this end, the United Nations system will support institutions and CSOs with mechanisms of transitional justice as a means to address grievances and possible injustices of the past and to promote cooperation between ethnic groups in order to prevent the spread of divisive narratives to younger generations and strengthen mutual respect for cultural heritage. The Cooperation Framework will support the work of the institutions (especially those working to address past grievances) and empower interethnic dialogue that goes beyond the circles of politicians and power centres to help build trust and reconciliation.

Complementary to this, the United Nations system will support Kosovo institutions to address disenfranchisement, exclusion and increase public confidence in institutions, including at community level, especially among youth, women, and non-majority groups. This will be achieved through collaboration with institutions to develop and implement a participatory, community-based approach, empowering adolescents, youth and minority community groups, addressing the needs of displaced persons and those hosting them, and supporting women as agents of change in advancing intercommunity dialogue and trust-building in line with Women, Peace and Security (WPS) commitments.

The cooperation will support greater integration of non-majority communities and ensure they are engaged and well accepted as core constituents of Kosovo society. Emphasis on inclusion and more equitable social services, coupled with improved dialogue, curricular and extracurricular learning of official languages, interaction and empowerment will contribute to improved inter-ethnic trust, cooperation and engagement (that will be measured by a perceptions survey – Approximate SDG 10.2.1), reduced discrimination and greater trust in public institutions (measured by Public Pulse perception surveys – SDG 16.b.1 and SDG 16.7.2), and improved public perception of safety and security (Approximate SDG 16.1.4). Achievement of this outcome is dependent on progress in the normalisation of relations between Pristina and Belgrade.

Contributing United Nations entities:



- **CROSS-CUTTING THEME 5: Increased gender equality and rights-holders' participation, empowerment, and civic engagement**

Outcome 5. *By 2025, all women and men in Kosovo, particularly young people, vulnerable groups, and displaced persons increasingly achieve gender equality and claim their rights and fulfil civic responsibilities.*

Theory of change. The Cooperation Framework will contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women and men in Kosovo, particularly young people, vulnerable groups, voluntary non-majority returnees and displaced persons, as a means to change their behaviour and increasingly claim and exercise their rights. This outcome is considered cross-cutting since the empowerment of rights-holders is expected to pressure duty bearers (who have the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights) to bring positive changes in other Cooperation Framework outcomes (e.g. accountable governance; inclusive and non-discriminatory social services; resilient, sustainable and more inclusive economic development and social cohesion).

To this end, the United Nations system will utilize its comparative advantages and work with CSOs, women's groups, education institutions and other implementing partners to empower Kosovo residents, especially women, adolescents and young people, vulnerable groups, voluntary non-majority returnees and displaced persons in exercising and protecting their basic rights and civic responsibilities and to encourage them to self-advocate when such rights are undermined by duty bearers.

The United Nations system will take action to advance sexual and reproductive rights of women and men, foster the inclusion of children and persons with disabilities, ensure rights of voluntary non-majority returnees and displaced persons and reduce all forms of violence with greater emphasis on domestic violence by addressing drivers of discrimination and gender inequality, such as discriminatory gender norms/stereotypes that contribute to women shouldering unpaid care and domestic work, thus impeding their socioeconomic and political participation, child and early marriages and other harmful practices.

Increased empowerment of rights-holders, together with capacity and policy improvements among duty bearers, is expected to bring considerable improvements in contraceptive use, family planning and women's health (SDG 3.7.1 and 5.6.1), attainment of durable solutions through physical, legal and material safety conditions of displaced persons (Approximate 10.3.1) and lead to a reduction in domestic violence (Approximate SDG 5.2.1).

Contributing United Nations entities:



2.5.1 PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are critical to this Cooperation Framework and represent the collective response of the United Nations system to help Kosovo advance towards its priorities and address identified gaps in its objective to meet the SDGs. Globally, the United Nations system seeks to work alongside governments as a partner and convenor rather than a mere donor. As such, the United Nations system in Kosovo will serve as an impartial, normative and operational development partner in cooperation with local and international agencies to strengthen development impacts for people in Kosovo in line with the SDGs, the LNOB principle and the priority of EU integration. Because the SDGs and EU integration priorities are closely aligned, the focus on SDG achievement will help Kosovo implement the SAA and advance towards EU integration.

Partnerships in this Cooperation Framework will be realised through engagement of the United Nations system with central and local institutions, line ministries, CSOs and women's right organizations at the local level and, where applicable, at global and regional levels, including academia and media, private businesses, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), volunteer groups foundations and other stakeholders. Partnerships will build on the outreach capacities of each actor to reach the most vulnerable groups and those at risk of being left behind. Collaboration in partnerships will be guided by shared values and principles and commitment to the SDGs.

The United Nations system will invite international actors, including the EU, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and bilateral development partners, as well as the World Bank, to share their expertise and knowledge by convening multi-stakeholder consultations, including through the existing EU Members States and relevant coordination platforms led by line ministries. The United Nations system will also build on existing partnerships, such as that with the Assembly of Kosovo based on its unanimous endorsement of the resolution on the SDGs which presents an opportunity for collaboration, as well as other institutions at the central and local levels, CSOs and businesses. It will also continue and expand regional cooperation through varied initiatives (Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), Regional Women's Lobby for Justice, Peace and Security in Southeast Europe (RWL-SEE), United Nations system-wide commitment to strengthen its support for trust-building and dialogue in the region, as agreed by the United Nations leadership in 2019, European Programme of Work 2020-2025 "United Action for Better Health in Europe"¹⁷) and build new partnerships, drawing on the specific skills and expertise of varied organizations and institutions that can help Kosovo in its endeavour to achieve the SDGs.

Each outcome will necessitate engagement of the United Nations system with key strategic partners, as outlined below.

Outcome 1. To ensure more accountable, effective, transparent, and gender-responsive institutions that guarantee access to justice, equality and participation for all and at all levels, key strategic partners for this outcome will include: central and local institutions; Kosovo Assembly; Ombudsperson Institution of Kosovo; Kosovo Prosecutorial Council and the prosecution service; Kosovo Judicial Council and courts; Kosovo Police, Agency for Free Legal

¹⁷ The European Programme of Work 2020-2025 (EPW) has been developed through consultations with member states, European Commission, WHO and others. It pursues three major objectives (to ensure universal access to quality health care; to provide effective protection against health emergencies; and to develop healthy communities). The WHO Regional Office for Europe will implement EPW across the region including in Kosovo, to support health authorities to rise to those challenges. This is in line with the European Commission's Kosovo* 2020 Report of 6 October 2020, available at < https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhoodenlargement/sites/near/files/kosovo_report_2020.pdf >, which found that health promotion and the prevention of non-communicable diseases remains weak (page 83).

Aid; Kosovo Election Committee; Kosovo Anti-Corruption Agency; Agency for Gender Equality; and line ministries i.e. Ministry of Justice including Agency for Administration of Sequestered or Confiscated Assets, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Local Governance and Administration, Ministry of Finance Including Customs, Tax Administration, FIU and Central procurement Agency, Kosovo Association of Municipalities, Kosovo Agency of Statistics) and CSOs (including those that seek to address the needs of vulnerable and excluded persons), women's right organizations and youth groups.

Outcome 2. To ensure improved access to, and utilization of, equitable, integrated social protection, universal health services and quality education, key strategic partners for this outcome will include: Kosovo Assembly; Strategic Planning Office within the Prime Minister's Office, Office of Good Governance within the Prime Minister's Office; Ministry of Health, Institute of Public Health; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare; Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports; academia; media; and private sector organizations, and CSOs (including those that seek to address the needs of vulnerable and excluded persons), women's right organizations and youth groups.

Outcome 3. To increase access to decent work and benefits from sustainable and inclusive economic development that is more resilient to impacts of climate change, disasters and emergencies, key strategic partners for this outcome include: Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare; Ministry of Local Governance and Administration; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development; Kosovo Central Bank; Kosovo Cadastre Office; Agency for Business Registration; Labour Inspectorate; Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency; Agency for Employment; Kosovo Chamber of Commerce, Kosovo Forest Agency; Kosovo Association of Municipalities; and Kosovo Agency of Statistics; CSOs (including those that seek to address the needs of vulnerable and excluded persons), women's right organizations and youth groups.

Outcome 4. To ensure all communities in Kosovo equitably benefit from inclusive engagement and greater social cohesion, key strategic partners for this outcome will include: Ministry of Communities and Return; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Internal Affairs; Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports; Office of Language Commissionaire; relevant agencies and local institutions, CSOs (including those that seek to address the needs of vulnerable and excluded persons), women's right organizations and youth groups.

Outcome 5 (cross-cutting theme). To ensure all women and men in Kosovo, particularly young people, vulnerable groups and displaced persons, increasingly claim their rights and fulfil civic responsibilities, key strategic partners for this outcome will include: Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Internal Affairs; Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare; Kosovo Police; Kosovo Agency of Statistics; Agency for Gender Equality and education institutions, CSOs (including those that seek to address the needs of vulnerable and excluded persons), women's right organizations and youthgroups.

2.6 SYNERGIES BETWEEN COOPERATION FRAMEWORK OUTCOMES

Each outcome associated with this Cooperation Framework will amplify the impact of the other outcomes and contribute to overall effectiveness. As such, achievement of the SDGs is the overriding objective and focus. Achievement of the SDG targets and indicators will result from multiple direct and indirect efforts across the outcomes. Work towards any one outcome is expected to contribute to, and amplify, the impact of each of the other outcomes.

Outcome 1 (accountable governance) will have the highest degree of synergy with them. Efforts towards the transparency and integrity of institutions, and the introduction of systemic changes in public administration and improvement of governance, will have a horizontal and vertical impact on a wide range of institutions. As such, this outcome may significantly interplay and contribute to **Outcome 2** (social inclusion) by rendering social service institutions more accountable and efficient in service delivery, and by empowering rights-holders to seek access to services and better quality. It will also contribute to **Outcome 3** as it seeks to empower rights-holders and strengthen institutions to improve the oversight of labour markets and environmental pollution. Work on Outcome 1 will also contribute to increased social cohesion (**Outcome 4**), particularly as it pertains to improving gender balance in public institutions, which will be reflected in more inclusive policy outcomes, particularly with respect to gender equality. Outcome 1 also contributes considerably to other priority objectives of Kosovo as elaborated in strategic framework documents, particularly the NDS and efforts to address key identified obstacles to growth, such as public administration reform and weaknesses in rule of law.

Outcome 2 (social inclusion) will have the most direct implication in terms of SDGs as it will impact social indicators directly improving social indicators related to those who are at most risk of being left behind. As in the case with **Outcome 3** (resilience to climate change natural disasters), the immediate impact of these interventions will be more visible at the institutional and policy levels rather than in the final impact of the cooperation, in terms of improved health and education outcomes, which are more long-term. The support will focus on creating synergy with **Outcome 3**, by strengthening the capabilities of the workforce, and with **Outcome 4** (social cohesion) by increasing social mobility and institutional support for those who are left behind to reduce social exclusion and related tension. By tackling the root causes and drivers of gender discrimination and inequality under Outcome 5, including addressing deeply-rooted gender stereotypes and discriminatory gender norms, key barriers to women's political and economic participation and empowerment (identified under Outcomes 1 and 3) will be addressed, thus enabling women to contribute to sustainable development and social cohesion as agents of change.

The UNKT's cross-cutting efforts to empower rights-holders will have multiplying effects across all other outcomes. Stronger and more effective voices of rights-holders will ensure accountability (**Outcome 1**), inclusiveness (**Outcome 2**) and cohesion (**Outcome 5**).

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and in line with the call of the Decade of Action to deliver the 2030 Agenda, which the COVID-19 response has made more urgent, the UNKT developed a Socio-Economic Response Plan (SERP) aimed at mitigating the impacts of the pandemic in Kosovo. This Plan puts into practice the recent report of the **Secretary-General**, entitled "Shared Responsibility, Global Solidarity", and sets out the United Nations system integrated offer to the authorities and the people of Kosovo in the face of COVID-19 over the next six to 24 months, contributing to saving lives, protecting people, and rebuilding better.

Complementarily, the UNKT SERP which draws on the full capabilities of the UNKT, is fully aligned with Kosovo's priorities and needs, and closely coordinated with the EU and other development partners. The SERP forms an integral part of the Cooperation Framework linked to all five outcomes through its five pillars focused on protecting health services and Kosovo's health system; protecting people; supporting economic recovery and Kosovo's macro-economic response; and supporting social cohesion and community resilience. Progress towards the SERP is being measured through monitoring of an action plan and progress towards global indicators.

2.7 SUSTAINABILITY

Importantly, this Cooperation Framework opens a space for traditional and new stakeholders to engage in Kosovo's sustainable development trajectory, which will help ensure continued investment in results and wider sharing and management of risks. The ownership of, and leadership in, this process by the government of Kosovo plays a key role in ensuring the sustainability of proposed interventions, and is ensured through a longstanding consultation process that began in 2019 and, despite challenges related to the change of governments, has engaged a multitude of stakeholders from the Kosovo government and Kosovo institutions. In addition, the Cooperation Framework promotes a stronger, deeper engagement with the private sector, as drivers of economic growth diversification, with civil society groups to create more space for their services at the community level, and especially for vulnerable groups and those at risk of being left behind.

In order to ensure sustainable change in Kosovo, the solutions identified in this Cooperation Framework also stress developing institutional capacities that are more efficient (value for money) and effective (impactful). A tailored capacity development approach for each expected outcome will be essential. In close collaboration with Kosovo institutions, the United Nations system will base initiatives on capacity assessments, such as the EU Progress report on SAA implementation and the Rule of Law functional review (underway), and innovative measures to address institutional bottlenecks and produce actionable results, including through enhanced cross-sector collaboration and by addressing institutionally-engrained attitudes and practices that have been identified to disadvantage those in vulnerable situations.

The Cooperation Framework proposes structural solutions that are fully integrated into key public policies, regional frameworks, and wider United Nations and Kosovo frameworks, including the formulation and execution process of the annual budget and the 'NDS' 2021–2030. The efforts of Kosovo institutions to embed the SDG framework within the new NDS provide an opportunity to increase local ownership, maximise impact towards achievement of the SDGs and, ensure sustainability of the 2030 Agenda. The Cooperation Framework development pathways are similarly linked inextricably to government priorities embedded in the Government Programme 2020–2023, as well as institutional processes reflected in the European Reform Agenda 2019– 2021 (e.g. in the areas of employment, education, and investment). In addition, the Cooperation Framework is informed by, and complements, other United Nations frameworks for human rights, humanitarian, development assistance and priorities of the peace and security agendas, including the United Nations Action Plan for the Western Balkans: Sustaining peace through trust-building, dialogue and reconciliation. Additionally, and although Kosovo is not a party to United Nations and European human rights instruments, the Kosovo Constitution envisages their direct applicability and Kosovo carries out ad hoc reporting under several of those mechanisms. One example of this is the Inter-Agency Response Plan 2020, which sets out concrete steps in case of a refugee or migrant influx into Kosovo and which was recently adopted by United Nations and non-United Nations stakeholders after a collaborative process led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to complement this Cooperation Framework as well as the government contingency plan.¹⁸

¹⁸ In recent years, Kosovo became a transit route for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. The number of asylum seekers in 2019 significantly increased with 2,081 applications compared to 594 in 2018; 943 asylum applications were lodged in 2020 (until mid-August), primarily by applicants from Syria. Authorities need further strengthening capacities to profile and refer asylum seekers and migrants effectively, in particular with respect to vulnerabilities and unaccompanied and separated children. Since the activation of article 52 of the law on asylum at the end of January 2020, allowing migrants to decide on the asylum application within 72 hours the number of migrants outside the centres increased. In total, 994 (90% male and age between 18-34) persons have been registered at the police registration center and most of them transited through Kosovo.

Another example is the alignment of this Cooperation Framework with the United Nations' ISF, linking the UNKT's development approach with the peace and security pillar of UNMIK.¹⁹ The cross-sectoral thinking approaches and models with multi-sectoral benefits promoted by this Cooperation Framework will promote stronger linkages between policy and programme priorities and related SDGs and contribute to stronger institutional capacities and greater inter-ministerial and inter-agency coordination for enhanced planning, implementation, and monitoring of the coverage and quality of services in line with international standards.

Lastly, this Cooperation Framework targets the adoption of good practices that can be replicated and brought to scale. It focuses on the achievement of durable solutions rather than quick fixes, integrating an SDG approach (multidimensional, integrated and focused on sustainability) that will promote and facilitate long-term impact. It will develop enduring capacities among both policymakers and rights-holders to ensure Kosovo remains on track to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

2.8 UNITED NATIONS KOSOVO TEAM CONFIGURATION AND UNITED NATIONS COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

In order to fully deliver on its commitments under this Cooperation Framework, the United Nations system discussed and agreed on its configuration in accordance with the principle of “needs-based, tailored presence”, called for in the United Nations development system repositioning resolution. The United Nations system identified and addressed gaps in available expertise and competencies, reviewed its staffing structures and competencies and capitalised on resident and non-resident United Nations agency capacities and assets. To address the gaps, different business models will be applied with a focus on new capacities in the United Nations Development Coordinator Office and through a United Nations system agency, regional office, or headquarters.

Based on the review of capacities, resources and business models (irrespective of the physical location) of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, the United Nations Development Coordinator proposes the United Nations entities listed in the table in Annex 5 to serve as members of the United Nations development system to support Kosovo to realise the four priority areas, one cross-cutting theme and five outcomes set forth in the Cooperation Framework.

The United Nations agencies, funds and programmes coordinated with the leadership of the Development Coordinator and supported by the United Nations Development Coordinator's Office will continue to convene international development partners and actors in civil society and academia on a regular basis to assess emerging trends and opportunities for Kosovo to benefit from international technical support in its efforts to meet the 2030 Agenda.

¹⁹ The ISF is a system-wide framework on agreed strategic priorities for shared peacebuilding/peace consolidation priorities. Even though Kosovo is not an integrated setting, the ISF successfully promotes cooperation between UNKT and UNMIK, to identify strategic joint interventions in line with respective mandates and strategic visions, to avoid gaps and overlaps between different United Nations activities, to identify opportunities for closer cooperation across different parts of UNMIK and UNKT, and to promote coherence and consistency across the United Nations family in Kosovo.

3. COOPERATION FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

3.1 COOPERATION FRAMEWORK GOVERNANCE

The Cooperation Framework will be implemented under the overall coordination of the United Nations Development Coordinator in close consultation with the Co-Chairs of the results groups and under the overall guidance of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC). A JSC composed of government representatives, agencies, funds and programmes of the UNKT and UNMIK, and co-chaired by the Prime Minister and the United Nations Development Coordinator will be established upon the commencement of the Cooperation Framework, while Results Groups established in line with the five outcomes, will allow for improved coordination and joint programming.

Implementation of the Cooperation Framework will involve this joint United Nations-government mechanisms for effective coordination and implementation of United Nations system cooperation. Based on the detailed cooperation results and strategies described in Section 2 and the results matrix (Annex 1), emphasis is placed on the achievement of planned outcomes and coordinated, coherent efforts to make tangible, measurable contributions to priority areas and the SDGs.

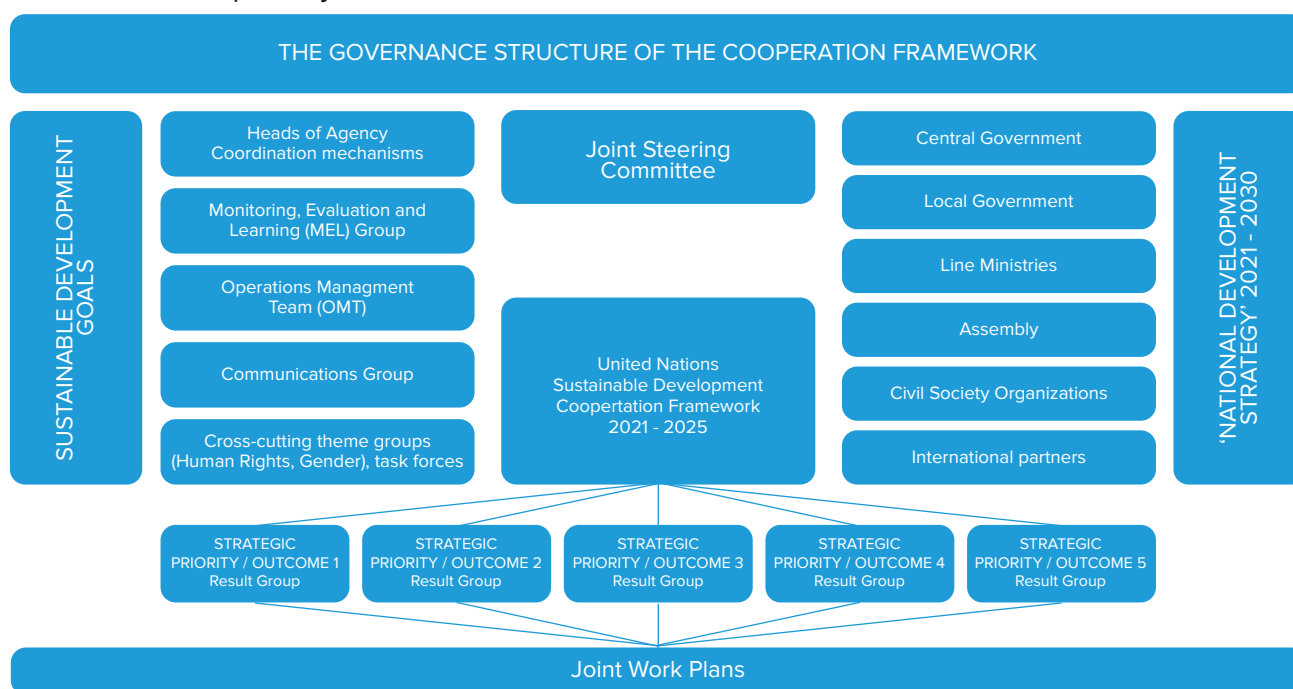


Figure 2 Cooperation Framework Governance Structure

3.2. COOPERATION FRAMEWORK MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Cooperation Framework will be made operational through development of joint workplan(s) (JWPs)²⁰ and agency-special programme documents, workplans and project

²⁰ As per the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on adopting the “Delivering as One” approach.

documents, as necessary, which outline the results to be achieved and will form an agreement between the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and each implementing partner on the use of resources. The JWPs will summarise the Cooperation Framework's outputs, and related United Nations development contributions, delivered jointly or by individual entities, with a view to optimise synergies, avoid duplication, maximise resources and address funding gaps.

To the extent possible the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and partners will use the minimum documents necessary, namely the signed Cooperation Framework and signed joint or agency-specific programme documents, workplans and project documents to implement programmatic initiatives. However, as necessary and appropriate, project documents can be prepared using, inter alia, the relevant text from the Cooperation Framework and joint or agency-specific workplans and/or project documents.²¹

Communication and advocacy are integral to the JWPs and should be costed. Related activities should be outlined in JWPs and in individual agency workplans. A Cooperation Framework Communication Strategy will be developed, after the Cooperation Framework is signed.

3.3 RESOURCING THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

The United Nations agencies, funds and programmes will provide support towards development and implementation of activities within the Cooperation Framework, which may include technical support, cash assistance, supplies, commodities and equipment, procurement services, transport, funds for advocacy, research and studies, consultancies, programme development, M&E, training activities and staff support. Part of the support provided by the United Nations system may be directed to non-governmental and CSOs, as agreed within the framework of the individual workplans and project documents. Additional support may include access to United Nations global information systems, the network of the United Nations agencies' respective offices and specialized information systems, including rosters of consultants and providers of development services, and access to the support provided by the network of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. The United Nations agencies, funds and programmes shall appoint staff and consultants for programme development, programme support, technical assistance, and M&E activities. Subject to annual reviews and progress in programme implementation, the funds of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are distributed by calendar year and in accordance with the Cooperation Framework. Budgets will be reviewed and further detailed in the workplans and project documents. By mutual consent between the government and the United Nations development system entities, funds not earmarked by donors for specific activities implemented by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes may be reallocated to other worthwhile activities. The government will support the efforts of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to raise funds to meet the needs of this Cooperation Framework and will cooperate with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to: encourage potential donor governments and international financing institutions to make available to the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes the funds needed to implement unfunded components of the programme; endorse efforts of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to raise funds for the programme from other sources,

²¹ In the case of UNDP, the Government Coordinating Authority will nominate the Government Co-operating Agency directly responsible for the government's participation in each UNDP-assisted workplan. Reference to "implementing partner(s)" shall mean "executing agency(s)" as used in the SBAA. Where there are multiple implementing partners identified in a workplan, a principal implementing partner will be identified and have responsibility for convening, coordinating and overall monitoring (programme and financial) of all implementing partners identified in the workplan to ensure inputs are provided and activities undertaken in a coherent manner to produce the intended results.

including the private sector internationally and in Kosovo; and permit contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations in Kosovo to support this programme, which will be tax exempt for the donor, to the maximum extent permissible under applicable law.

3.4 DERIVATION OF UNITED NATIONS ENTITY PROGRAMMING INSTRUMENTS FROM THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

The Cooperation Framework provides the overarching framework for development results delivered collectively and by individual entities. Agencies derived their respective programme outcome documents from the Cooperation Framework, which were developed in parallel with the Cooperation Framework. The relation between the United Nations Development Coordinator and the United Nations Kosovo Team is managed through the Management and Accountability Framework (MAF) of 2019.

The Cooperation Framework is implemented through United Nations development system entity instruments for development programming documents. These entities derived their development programming from the Cooperation Framework based on three options: **Option A** – United Nations development system entities **adopted the Cooperation Framework as their own** development programme document; **Option B** – United Nations development system entities **developed entity-specific development programme documents** with Cooperation Framework outcomes copied verbatim; or **Option C** – United Nations development system entities developed entity-specific **development programme documents** with Cooperation Framework outcomes copied verbatim, plus additional outcomes that are not in the Cooperation Framework, included only on an exceptional basis to capture normative and standard-setting activities not prioritised in the Cooperation Framework.

United Nations development entities with global or regional programmes or without specific programme outcome documents will pursue additional activities not directly relating to the Cooperation Framework in line with the MAF.

In line with General Assembly resolution 72/279 and the MAF, the United Nations Development Coordinator (DC) coordinates implementation of the Cooperation Framework and works with UNKT members to align United Nations development system entity development programming documents with the Cooperation Framework and the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations DC has had the opportunity to review and comment on the development programming documents of the entities before their submission to governing mechanisms, with a view to confirm alignment and coherence with the Cooperation Framework, identify opportunities for synergies and complementarities, and avoid duplication and overlap.

3.5 JOINT WORKPLANS

The Cooperation Framework will be operationalised through the development of JWPs that will present the planned programmatic sub-outputs and resource contributions of each United Nations development system entity to Cooperation Framework outputs, consistent with the Theory of Change. They can be either unique to an agency or shared by two or more UNKT members.

The JWPs will be discussed within and across results groups to ensure gaps and overlaps, potentials for synergy and joint programmes are identified and streamlined. They will be endorsed by the UNKT and the JSC, and the endorsed JWP will be the basis for the Annual Performance Review, which will feed directly into preparation of the annual United Nations Kosovo results report. All JWPs will be prepared online in UNINFO.

3.6 BUSINESS OPERATIONS STRATEGY IN SUPPORT OF THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

Harmonisation of business operations processes for greater efficiency, reduced operational transaction costs, and decreased duplication of operational support to programme delivery by the United Nations system has been continuously called for by the General Assembly through various ECOSOC and other resolutions. The United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in Kosovo will have a BOS strategy in place and the impact of United Nations programmes in Kosovo is reliant on the effectiveness, efficiency, and cost of the operations that support them. Over time, the United Nations development system agencies are likely to deliver with better quality and lower cost business operations, with more resources remaining within the programme budget.

Kosovo Business Operations Strategy 2020–2021 is developed under the responsibility of the Operations Management Team (OMT) supported by the OMT Working Groups and coordinated by the Development Coordinator's Office.

The functions of facilities and events management, procurement, logistics, human resources, and ICT are identified as core functions for mainstreaming environmental action and, as such, serves as the strategic framework for the collective efforts of the United Nations system agencies reflecting the areas for strategic cooperation, collaboration and partnering to achieve common goals, principally through joint programming and collective advocacy.

The Kosovo BOS will be monitored and reported on annually, as per global guidance, to reduce costs and improve quality with respect to identified priorities.

4. COMMON KOSOVO ANALYSIS UPDATE, MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

4.1 UPDATES OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMON KOSOVO ANALYSIS

The United Nations CKA, which underpins the Cooperation Framework, will be reviewed annually to track situational development, and inform the work of the United Nations development system in Kosovo at regional and global levels. A repository for data and analysis should be established, include SDG data, and combine analytical resources held, updated, and made available by United Nations entities. The United Nations system may organize multi-stakeholder dialogues on evolving Kosovo contexts to update the CKA.

4.2 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING PLAN

A full costed monitoring, evaluation and learning plan (MEL plan) and an integrated M&E calendar covering the Cooperation Framework period will be developed after the Cooperation Framework is signed. The MEL plan is the responsibility of the UNKT and will cover both implementation and the communication of results. The MEL plan will be used to collect, compile and provide information systematically, consistently and logically so decision makers may easily access it to monitor the contribution (outputs) of United Nations agencies to development solutions and assess expected results (outcomes and impacts to final beneficiaries). In addition, it will provide for coordination and sharing of entity-specific data collection; participating in joint field visits; undertaking analysis and capacity development activities; monitoring risks and assumptions; reflecting learning to inform decisions and course corrections due to the evolving context; and support scheduled reviews and reporting.

Joint monitoring throughout the Cooperation Framework cycle will ensure the UNKT is (a) delivering on its commitment to LNOB, and achieving results that uphold the Cooperation Framework Guiding Principles; (b) helping Kosovo partners develop capacities; (c) mitigating drivers of conflict, disaster risks, humanitarian crises and complex emergencies, including through cooperation and complementarity in activities related to development, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action and sustaining peace; (d) fostering new, effective partnerships between local stakeholders and international actors (e.g. through South-South and triangular cooperation); and (e) promoting integrated, coherent policy support.

The MEL plan will include baselines, targets, indicators, data collection methods and means of verification. Data for baselines and targets is disaggregated by sex, area, income, and subpopulation groups, especially vulnerable groups, to the extent possible. Indicators for the Cooperation Framework results, and MEL plan are aligned with, and support, the Kosovo monitoring system and SDG indicators. Many Cooperation Framework outcome indicators are based on Kosovo available data and data collection systems.

Data collection methods (including in areas with limited access) are included in the Cooperation Framework results matrix and will be expanded, upon discussion with the outcome results groups. Gaps in data will be addressed through ongoing support to the statistical system, surveys or other studies identified as a part of the Cooperation Framework.

The Cooperation Framework results matrix (Annex 1) will serve as the main tool against which progress is measured. The results matrix will be a living document; programming can be refined and adjusted during annual performance reviews considering changes in the Kosovo context and progress in the programmes.

Cooperation Framework delivery is supported by an inter-agency SDG/Monitoring and Evaluation Group, which will provide technical support to the UNCT and results groups in all related matters; United Nations Communications Group (UNCG), responsible for communicating United Nations results and advocating for development change; United Nations Operations Management Team (OMT) responsible for providing support and advice on common business operations and measures to improve efficiency in delivery on United Nations programmes and activities by harmonising business operations; Gender Theme Group (GTG) responsible for providing guidance to mainstream gender within joint programmes and promote the sharing of information, knowledge and experiences on best practices for gender equality and women's empowerment; Human Rights Working Group responsible for providing support to UNKT and Kosovo institutions to strengthen capacities for the promotion and protection of human rights. Other groups or task forces will be defined after the commencement of the Cooperation Framework.

4.3 RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The United Nations system foresees various political, governmental, economic, and social risks as potential hindrances to achievement of the outcomes.

Political:

- Lack of conclusion on the visa liberalization may affect Kosovo's perception of EU integration.
- Slow progress on rule of law and other reforms, as referred to in the EU Annual Report on Kosovo, may delay EU integration.
- Slow progress in the normalisation of Pristina-Belgrade relations could increase polarisation within Kosovo and mistrust among ethnic groups as well as the divisive political narratives in the public discourse by politicians and media. This can also negatively impact the participation of the Kosovo-Serb representatives in Kosovo institutions.
- Indictments by the Specialist Chambers could further create tension and polarisation in society and media, weakened government, instability, and a delayed Pristina-Belgrade dialogue process.

Government and Legal:

- The government reform programme could be derailed by increased political polarisation and instability related to potential coalition disagreements on internal and external policies, including on the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue.
- Despite notable progress, delays in concluding reforms and implementation of the rule of law sector could affect the ability of the government to deliver on the fight against corruption.
- Political and social exclusion would further marginalise individuals (e.g. women, youth).

Economic and Social:

- Economic growth could be less than expected, particularly as a result of COVID-19, affecting Kosovo's ability to deliver on reforming the health and educational systems.
- Net emigration of younger, higher-skilled workers could continue due to potential visa liberalization limitations, thereby weakening growth prospects and demographics.

The risk management strategy involves:

- Advocacy for government cost-sharing to help fund the agreed CF outcomes, and inclusion of relevant SDG priorities in the "Kosovo Consolidated Budget" framework;
- A Cooperation Framework Funding Framework, driven by the JSC, that promotes stronger partnerships with civil society, the private sector, and IFIs; and
- Stronger, more sustained cross-sectoral policy and programme coordination, led by the JSC to help link the planned Cooperation Framework results with government policy and programmes and ensure data and evidence are used to influence delivery.

The Cooperation Framework will:

- Serve as a platform to engage new stakeholders in implementation of the SDGs;
- Create an environment conducive to broader public-private partnerships;
- Advocate for joint programmes and activities to decrease bureaucratic procedures and increase efficiency in supporting those most in need; and
- Pilot new technologies and innovations to monitor areas where access to data is limited.

4.4 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND KOSOVO RESULTS REPORTING

Review and reporting will compare actual progress against expected results and convey the contribution of cooperation efforts to key catalytic development solutions and achievement of SDGs. The primary responsibility for assessing progress in implementation of the Cooperation Framework lies with the Cooperation Framework JSC, the Development Coordinator and the UNKT and is achieved through routine monitoring and reporting by the Cooperation Framework results groups against detailed results and activities described in JWPs. The key steps in reviewing and reporting on the Cooperation Framework results are outlined below.

- *Twice-yearly reviews by the Outcome results groups will share information, track achievement of Cooperation Framework outputs and their contribution towards outcomes and related SDG targets. This will be achieved using the results and indicators provided in the Results Matrix (Annex 1) and JWPs. These reviews will enable partners, on an annual basis, to adapt results and strategy and make course corrections that reflect changes in socioeconomic conditions, and new, emerging priorities.*
- *Preparation of the **annual One United Nations Kosovo results report**²² describing actual outputs will be delivered against those planned in JWP and progress towards the Cooperation Framework outcomes and related SDG targets and financial delivery.*
- *Regular liaison and **information-sharing between the SC and the Council for Sustainable Development (CSD)** will ensure effective alignment with the evolving strategy, plans, and programmes for SDG achievement. Reporting will be strengthened by the relationship between the JSC and CSD in the Kosovo Assembly.*
- *Review of the Kosovo progress against social, economic and environmental dimensions will be based on the annual update of the **United Nations** CKA undertaken internally by the United Nations agencies.*

4.5 EVALUATION PLAN

An independent evaluation will be conducted in the penultimate year of implementation to assess the relevance and coherence of the Cooperation Framework outcomes, the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation by resident and non-resident United Nations agencies in Kosovo and their partners, and the sustainability of results and contribution to Kosovo priorities and SDG targets. It will respect United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards and be carried out as a gender-responsive, inclusive, participatory exercise involving all stakeholders. Conclusions and lessons learned will shape the next Cooperation Framework. Programme evaluations of United Nations entities will be conducted before the Cooperation Framework evaluation, or in parallel with it, in order to contribute to it.

²² The progress update will follow the UNSDG Standard Operational Format and Guidelines for Reporting Progress on the Cooperation Framework.

Annex 1. Results Matrix

Impact: Improved well-being among people of Kosovo, in particular of the most vulnerable, in a just and equitable society, in line with international human rights standards

SDGs and SDG Targets: **SDG 1** (Targets 1.1, 1.2, 1.3); **SDG 2** (Targets 2.3); **SDG 3** (Targets 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.9); **SDG 4** (Targets 4.2); **SDG 5** (Targets 5.1, 5.2, 5.a, 5.c.); **SDG 8** (Targets 8.7, 8.8), **SDG 10** (Targets 10.1, 10.2), **SDG 11** (Targets 11.2, 11.5), **SDG 13** (Targets 13.5); **SDG 15** (15.1, 15.2); **SDG 16** (Targets 16.2)

Priority Area 1: Accountable governance

SDGs and Targets: **SDG 16** (Targets 16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 16.6, 16.7, 16.9); **SDG 5** (Target 5.5); **SDG 11** (Targets 11.3)

Kosovo development priorities:

Economic Reform Programme 2019–21 Reform Measure #9: Increase the efficiency of the judiciary in resolving cases

European Reform Agenda: Good Governance and the Rule of Law

Nat Development Strategy 2016–21: Pillar two on Good Governance and Rule of Law

Kosovo Draft Programme on Gender Equality 2020–2025

Regional frameworks

FRONTEX Arrangements between EU and Kosovo

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
Outcome 1: <i>By 2025, all women and men in Kosovo enjoy more accountable, effective, transparent, and genderresponsive institutions at all levels ensuring access to justice, equality and participation for all</i>	Perception of people satisfied with the performance of Kosovo institutions (UNDP ²³) – SDG 16.6.2 ²⁴	22% (2019) Men: 18.6% Women: 20.7% K-Alb: 17.8% K-Serb: 3.2% K-Other: 20.9%	25% Men: 21% Women: 24% K-Alb: 21% K-Serb: 7% K-Other: 24%	Survey/Public Pulse (UNDP)	There is government buyin and commitment towards advancing good governance practices. Kosovo institutions remain committed to promoting and strengthening the rule of law and human rights. Donor community remains committed to the development of Kosovo in this sector. Kosovo political parties continue to promote and strengthen the position of women in politics. Kosovo political parties intensify their efforts to promote women in local governance and propose more women candidates for local election.
	Perception of people who believe that decision-making in Kosovo institutions is inclusive and responsive (UNDP) – SDG 16.7.2	6.75% (2019) Men: 5.95% Women: 7.55% K-Alb: 6% K-Serb: 20.7% K-Other: 6.2%	More than baseline	Survey/Public Pulse (UNDP)	
	People participation in public consultations ²⁵ (UN-Habitat and other involved agencies) – SDG 11.3.2*	53.79% (2019); Women: 47.11% (2019)	65%; Women 60%	Municipalities' Performance Report (MLGA)	
	Corruption Perception Index Value (UNDP) – SDG 16.5.1*	36 (2019)	45	Index/ Transparency International	
	Value of criminal assets frozen, seized and confiscated (UNODC) –SDG 16.4*	Value of assets frozen (2019): € 3,358,030.25 Value of assets seized (2019): € 429,277.38 € Value of assets confiscated (2019): € 991,593.51	Increase in value of assets (frozen, seized and confiscated)	Administrative records, activity reports (UNODC) Annual Reports (UNDP)	

²³ United Nations agencies referred under outcome indicators should be understood in the context of the custodian agencies responsible for collection and reporting of indicators

²⁴ SDG Indicators that are shown with “*” should be understood as proxy indicator.

²⁵ The indicator measures the level of people participation in all public consultations in relation to the number of inhabitants in the municipality. The municipality's final percentage is derived by dividing the municipality's result with that of the best performing municipality

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
	Number of (vulnerable) people/cases benefiting from access to justice (UNHCR, UNDP, IOM) – SDG 16.3*	650 (Women: 319) supported by CSOs ²⁶ and 5,539 cases handled by the Agency of Free Legal Aid	3,000 (Women: 1225) supported by CSOs ²⁷ and 6,500 cases handled by the Agency of Free Legal Aid	Yearly progress reports (UNHCR) Administrative reports, IOM database Yearly progress report (UNDP) Reports from AFLA	
	Percentage of the recommendations issued by the Ombuds-person Institution (OiK) implemented by Kosovo authorities (OHCHR)	34% (2019)	50%	OiK annual report	
	Proportion of women in decisionmaking positions at central and local levels (UN Women) – SDG 5.5.1	31.2% (2019 general election) 36% (2017 municipal elections) 33.3% women ministers (2019 general elections) 0% women mayors (2017 municipal elections)	40% general elections 40% municipal elections 40% women ministers 10% women mayors	Kosovo Central Election Commission records	
	Existence of functional system that tracks and makes public allocation for gender equality and women's empowerment (UN Women) SDG 5.c.1	Not in place	System in place to track at central and municipal levels	Yearly Progress Report (UN Women)	

²⁶ Of these, 250 were at risk of statelessness, 240 were returnees and 160 were IDPs.

²⁷ Of these, 960 were at risk of statelessness, 924 were returnees, 616 were IDPs, and 500 were migrants.

Priority Area 2: Inclusive and non-discriminatory social policies and services

SDGs and Targets:

SDG 3 (Targets 3.8, 3b,3d); SDG 4 (Targets 4.1, 4.2, 4.4); SDG 5 (Targets 5.3); SDG 10 (Targets 10.7) SDG 16 (Target 16.2)

Kosovo development priorities

Economic Reform Programme 2019–21: Measure #17: Improvement of the quality and increase in the inclusion of children in pre-university education;

Reform Measure #18: Reform in Pre-University Education; Reform Measure #20: Improvement of social and health services

European Reform Agenda: Employment and Education

'National Development Strategy' 2016–21: Pillar one Human Capital

Regional frameworks

Development and Implementation of Clinical Guidelines for Sexual and Reproductive Health: Programme Guidance for Countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Sexual & Reproductive Health UHC Guide

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: Where is Eastern Europe and Central Asia region fifteen years later

Roadmap to Prepare National Action Plans for the Implementation of Organized Cervical Cancer Screening Programmes in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Demographic Resilience Programme for Europe & Central Asia

Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI)

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
Outcome 2 <i>By 2025, all girls and boys, women and men, particularly the most marginalised have improved access to and utilize equitable, qualitative, integrated social protection, universal health services and quality education</i>	Coverage of essential health services (Universal Health Coverage) – SDG 3.8.1	70% of UHC provided (2019)	85% of UHC	MoH	Kosovo institutions support policy changes, continue to invest in maternal, child health and early childhood development and education. Municipal level authorities are committed to implementation of skillsbased programmes; Parents and communities recognise the importance and demand for engagement of young people in skills-based learning. MEST continues its process of reform of the education system.
	Access to quality essential health-care services especially for noncommunicable diseases (NCD) (WHO)	There is no assessment of the quality of health services including for NCD	To be defined once the assessment of the quality of health services is conducted	Institute of Public Health (IPH)	
	Proportion of health emergencies that are rapidly detected and responded to (WHO) – SDG 3.d*	85% of all emergency events detected in time and responded to (2019)	95% of all emergency events detected in time and responded to	IPH	
	Level of access to safe, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines (UNICEF/UNFPA/WHO) – SDG 3.b.1* and SDG 3.b.3*	Percentage of children under 1 year that receive DPT3 vaccine: 95% (Boys: 95% Girls: 95% Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian 63%) (2020) 1 type of modern contraceptive s procured through Essential Drug List (2019)	Total: 98 % (Boys: 98% Girls: 98% Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian: 80%) 3 types of modern contraceptive s procured through Essential Drug List	Survey and administrative records/MICS (UNICEF) Administrative/ Yearly Progress Report	There is sufficient political will to prioritise the protection of women and girls against domestic violence and support the reintegration of survivors into society. Kosovo government and local authorities work in a coordinated manner towards offering protection-of DV and GBV survivors, persons in need of assistance and vulnerable migrants and refugees.
	Proportion of children 0–5 months old who are exclusively breastfed (UNICEF)	Total: 40% Urban: 50% Rural: 34% (2020)	Total: 55% Urban: 65% Rural: 53%	Survey and administrative records/MICS (UNICEF)	
	Number of health institutions that provide Cervical Cancer Screening services and early detection of breast cancer (UNFPA)	5 (2019)	15 (2025)	Administrative/ Yearly Progress Report	

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
	Percentage of children (36–59 months) attending an early childhood education programme (UNICEF) – SDG 4.2.2	14% Girls: 14% Boys: 14%	50% Girls: 50% Boys: 50%	Survey/MICS (UNICEF)	
	Students achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in core subjects (UNICEF) – SDG 4.1.1	Math: 21% Reading: 23% Science: 23%	Math: 30% Reading: 30% Science: 30%	PISA Study	
	Proportion of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month (UNICEF) – SDG 16.2.1	Total: 61% Girls: 61% Boys: 61%	Total: 51% Girls: 51% Boys: 51%	Survey/MICS	
	Stranded migrants in Kosovo have access to shelter and essential social service including healthcare (IOM) – SDG 10.7*	Stranded migrants have no access to shelter and essential social services including health care	Shelter for stranded migrants and essential social services including healthcare available to migrants	Administrative reports, IOM reports	

Priority Area 3: Resilient, sustainable and inclusive economic development

SDGs and Targets:

SDG 1 (1.4, 1a); SDG 2; SDG 5 (Targets 5.a); SDG 8 (Targets 8.6, 8.7, 8.8); SDG 10 (Targets 10.2); SDG 11 (Targets 11.3, 11.6, 11.a); SDG 13 (Targets 13.2); SDG 15 (Targets 15.1, 15.2)

Kosovo development priorities

Economic Reform Programme 2019–21 Reform Measure #2: Further development of energy generation capacities; Reform Measure #11: Reduction of Informal Economy;

Reform Measure #16: Increase in quality of vocational education and training based on labour market requirements; Reform Measure #19: Increasing the access of youth and women to the labour market through the provision of quality employment services, active employment measures and entrepreneurship

European Reform Agenda: Competitiveness and Investment Climate; Employment and Education

'National Development Strategy' 2016–21: Pillar three on Competitive Industries and Pillar four on Infrastructure

Gender Equality Strategy

Regional frameworks

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
Outcome 3 <i>By 2025, women and men in Kosovo, particularly youth and vulnerable groups, have increased access to decent work and benefit from sustainable and inclusive economic development that is more resilient to impacts of climate change, disasters and emergencies</i>	Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training (NEET) (UNDP/UNICEF) – SDG 8.6.1	Total: 30.1% Girls: 30.2% Boys: 30% (2020)	Total: 25% Girls: 25% Boys: 25% (UNICEF and UNDP)	Survey/KAS	Kosovo institutions are committed to increase their efforts for inclusion of youth in the labour market. Barriers and discriminatory norms and practices that limit young women's participation in the labour market are addressed. Kosovo institutions and the legal framework continue to promote and guarantee women's equal rights regarding property and business ownership. Authorities are committed to support the inclusion of non-majority communities as a pre-requisite for the sustainable and inclusive economic development of
	Level of improvement of policies, rules and regulations on Occupational Safety and Health and labour rights for decent jobs. (UNOPS - IOM) - SDG 8.8.2*	7,285 labour inspection conducted (2017) Labour Inspector are not profiled and specialized on OSH There is no full	About 15,000 labour inspections conducted (UNOPS) About 50% of labour inspectors are profiled and specialized in OSH sector (30% women) (UNOPS)	Labour Inspectorate, Yearly Report Project's endline Report	

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
		compliance of key recruiters on key int. recruitment standards for labour migration	There is compliance of key recruiters on key int. recruitment standards for labour migration		Kosovo. The mobility plan is implemented for Pristina and extension of the central heating network is expected to continue contributing positively to the level of pollution in Pristina. Municipalities improve cross sectoring coordination with central level institutions. Barriers and discriminatory practices affecting women-led business, including access to assets and finance and gender discrimination, are addressed. Green growth centres contribute to sustainable green solutions. Recovery interventions will be aligned with Kosovo recovery measures and coordinated with other stakeholders. Kosovo government advances measures for the sustainable socioeconomic reintegration of repatriated persons. Kosovo Forestry Agency is committed to implement FMPs.
	Number of children in child labour that were identified and protected by interinstitutional mechanisms and policy support (ILO) –SDG 8.7.1*	129 (2019) ²⁸	At least 30% more from the baseline	Monitoring system of child labour	
	Number of people benefiting from socioeconomic recovery measures (UNDP-IOM)	0 (2021)	Number of individuals TBD by Government overall targets (50% Women and 10% nonmajority beneficiaries 2025)	Progress reports Agency for Employment reports	
	Proportion of women property owners (UN Women) – SDG 1.4* and SDG 5.a.1 (b)*	17% (2019)	22%	Kosovo Cadastre Office	Government commitment to timber legality reforms and law enforcement, participatory multipurpose forestry, value chain development, implementation of forest policies and programs Air Quality and Human Health assessment - case of Western Balkans Assessments to inform the state of air quality developed and made available to decision makers and relevant stakeholders The Regional strategy on climate proofing and green infrastructure developed and discussed with the key stakeholders, further development of documentation for governmental adoption
	Proportion of women led businesses (UN Women)	11% (2019)	15%	Agency for business registration, Open businesses portal	
	Average time spent in unpaid domestic and care work (UN Women) - SDG 5.4.1	7.2 hours for women and 2.5 hours for men (2018)	4.5 hours for women and 2 hours for men	Millennium Challenge Cooperation/Kosovo Labour Force and Time Use Study	
	Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex: and share of women among owners or rightsbearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure (FAO) - SDG 5.a.1 (a) 5.a.1 (b)	Women: 4.9% Men: 94.9% (2017)	Women: 20% Men: 80%	Survey (TBD)	
	Level of air pollution (UNDP) – SDG 11.6.2	Pristina region during Oct-Dec: PM10: 56 µg/m ³ ; PM2.5: 42 µg/m ³ (2018)	Pristina region during Oct-Dec: PM10: 30 µg/m ³ ; PM2.5: 20 µg/m ³	Measurement/Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency Reports (Project) Endline Report Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of Kosovo	

²⁸ The new digital information system being developed will allow for disaggregated data to be added on many levels.

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
	Climate change mitigation and adaptation agenda advanced (UNDP) (Level of overall Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions) (UNDP) – SDG 13.2.1	10.5 Mt CO2 eq (2015)	9.5 Mt CO2 eq (2025)	Kosovo Agency of Statistics Yearly Report (Project) Endline Report Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of Kosovo	
	Average percentage of municipalities' area that is covered with detailed regulatory plans) (UN-Habitat) –SDG 11.A.1*	14.05% (2019)	25%	Municipalities' performance Report (MLGA);	
	Average performance of Municipalities' in environmental protection indicators (Implementation of the local environmental action plan; Municipal environmental permits issued; and New buildings that have applied for municipal environmental permits) (UNHabitat)	65.64 (2019)	75%	Municipalities Performance Report (MLGA);	
	Forest area as a proportion of total land area (FAO) – SDG 15.1.1 - Forest cover area (% of total land) Progress towards sustainable forest management (FAO) – SDG 15.2.1 - Area (ha) under Sustainable Forest Management Plans (FMP) - The rate of implementation of FMP - Share of Multi-Purpose Forest Management Planning	44.7% (481.000 ha) 60% of public forest is currently covered with FMP implementation rate of FMP 10% No Multi-Purpose (MP) FMPs	Increase of forest area for 3% (2023) 90% of public forest area covered with valid FMPs (2025) FMPs implemented rate 50% (2025) 4 new Multi-Purpose (MP) FMPs covering at minimum 20,000 ha (2025)	Kosovo Forest Agency (KFA) Forest Inventory NARP Kosovo Forest Information System (KFIS) Kosovo Forest Agency (KFA) Forest Inventory Kosovo Forest Information System (KFIS)	

Priority Area 4: Social Cohesion

SDGs and Targets: SDG 10 (Targets 10.7); SDG 11 (Targets 11.3), SDG 16 (Targets 16.1, 16.7, 16.b)

Kosovo development priorities

[TBD]

Regional frameworks

[TBD]

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
Outcome 4 <i>By 2025, all communities in Kosovo, benefit equitably from inclusive engagement and greater social cohesion</i>	Percentage of people who feel safe and secure (UNDP) –SDG 16.1.4*	75.60% (2019) Men: 71.4% Women: 72.90% K-Alb: 71%	85% Men: 80% Women: 77% More than baseline	Survey/Public Pulse (UNDP)	The security situation remains sufficiently stable to implement the planned actions. There is government buyin to advance inter-ethnic relations.

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
		K-Serb: 21.65% K-others: 58%			Kosovo institutions remain committed to promote and strengthen social cohesion and human rights.
	Percentage of people who felt discriminated in a situation in the last six months (UNDP) – SDG 10.2.1*	11% (2019) Men: 12.5% Women: 9.5% K-Alb: 10.9% K-Serb: 15.2% K-others: 12.2%	Less than baseline	Survey/Public Pulse (UNDP)	Donor community remains committed to the development of Kosovo in this sector.
	Public satisfaction with protection of cultural heritage (UNDP)	42.30% (2020) Men: 43% Women: 41.50% K-Alb: 42.60% K-Serb: 8.6% K-others: 51.50%	More than baseline	Survey/Public Pulse (UNDP)	
	Percentage of population that thinks that relations between Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs “are not so tense” and “are not tense at all” (UNDP/IOM) – SDG 16.b.1	20.2% (2019) Men: 22.5% Women: 17.9% K-Alb: 20.9% K-Serb: 13.1% K-Others: 14.2%	More than baseline	Survey/Public Pulse (UNDP)	
	Percentage of population that “agrees” and “strongly agrees” that Kosovo should be a secular, multi religious state (UNDP)	46.6% (2019) Men: 48.3% Women: 44.8% K-Alb: 46.8% K-Serb: 35.5% K-others: 42.8%	More than baseline	Survey/Public Pulse (UNDP)	

Cross-cutting Theme: Increased gender equality and rights-holders’ participation, empowerment and civic engagement
SDGs and Targets: SDG 3 (Target 3.7); SDG 5 (Targets, 5.2, 5.3, 5.6); SDG 10 (Targets 10.3) SDG 16 (16.b)

Kosovo development priorities
Gender Equality Strategy

Regional frameworks
United Nations Western Balkans Reconciliation Action Plan with relevant outcomes/priorities
Inter-Institutional Initiative on Durable Solutions for Displaced Persons from Kosovo “Skopje Process”

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
Outcome 5 <i>By 2025, all women and men in Kosovo, particularly young people, vulnerable groups and displaced persons, increasingly achieve gender equality, claim their rights and fulfil civic responsibilities</i>	Contraceptive use among reproductive age women and young people (UNFPA)	Modern contraceptive prevalence rate 13% (2014) 37.3% of young women (67.6% of young men) reporting the use of a condom during the	18% (2025) Young Women: 45% Young Men: 70% (2025)	Survey/MICS (UNICEF, UNFPA)	People in vulnerable situations are willing to demand the realisation of their rights. Kosovo government, local authorities and CSO intensify their efforts to accurately track cases of domestic violence. Kosovo authorities treat and redress complaints of domestic violence.

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target	Data source/MoV	Assumption Statement
		last sexual intercourse with a nonmarital, noncohabiting sex partner in the last 12 months (2014)			
	Percentage of women aged 15–49 years who are currently married or in union who are fecund and want to space their births or limit the number of children they have and who are not currently using contraception (UNFPA) – SDG 3.7.1*	8.9% (2014)	7% (2025)	Survey/MICS (UNICEF, UNFPA)	
	Percentage of people aged 15–49 years who state that domestic violence is justified ²⁹ (UNFPA)	Women: 32.9% Men: 14.9%; (2014)	Target: Women: 27% Men: 10% (2025)	Survey/MICS (UNICEF, UNFPA)	
	Number of complaints for domestic violence filed (UN Women) – SDG 5.2.1*	2198 (2019) Women 1530 (70%) Men 668 (30%) Majority communities 1848 (84%) Non-majority communities 350 (16%)	Decrease by 20%	MoJ Domestic Violence Database	
	Number of claims for rights violation filed by women before Ombudsperson's Institution (UN Women)	550 (2019)	600	Ombudsperson's Annual Report	
	Percentage of people who have carried out any volunteer work in the last 12 months (UNV)	15% (2017) ³⁰	25% (50% Women)	GAP Organized Communities: The Role and Importance of Active Citizenry	
	Number of displaced persons and vulnerable people that attain civil, political, social economic and cultural rights (UNHCR, IOM) –SDG 10.3.1*	600 (294 women) displaced persons	2500 (1225 women) displaced persons	Yearly progress reports (UNHCR) IOM reports/database	

Annex 2. Exchange of letters

²⁹ This includes individuals who state that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife in at least one of the following circumstances: (1) she goes out without telling him; (2) she neglects the children; (3) she argues with him; (4) she refuses sex with him; and (5) she burns the food.

³⁰ While there is no sex disaggregated data for the baseline, such data will be available for the target.



**To: H.E. Avdullah Hoti
Prime Minister**

3 December 2020

Subject: UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025

Honourable Prime Minister Hoti,

On behalf of the UNKT, I am honoured to officially submit herewith the final United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (Cooperation Framework) 2021-2025. I am grateful for your official endorsement of the document, which concludes the consultation process and prepare for the launch of the Cooperation Framework implementation in January 2021.

The Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 is shaped through a solid analysis of the local landscape, priorities, gaps and development challenges, articulating the UN development system's cooperation with local institutions and international partners to achieve progress on the Sustainable Development Goals as aligned with government priorities and EU integration objectives. Consultations carried out over the past months entailed a robust dialogue with the government, civil society organisations, international partners and programme beneficiaries with a view to focus the cooperation on agreed key priority areas that have the greatest potential for a transformative, inclusive and national wide sustainable development.

We were pleased to receive your endorsement of Cooperation Framework priorities as well as your acknowledgement of Cooperation Framework alignment and converging points with government priorities during our meeting on 14 October attended by yourself, select Ministers and members of your Cabinet.

As agreed in that meeting, the establishment of a Joint Steering Committee composed of government representatives and UNKT agencies, funds and programmes, co-chaired by the Prime Minister and the UN Development Coordinator, will mark the official commencement of Cooperation Framework implementation.

In closing, I would like to thank you for the endorsement of the Cooperation Framework by this "exchange of letters", marking our joint commitment to its successful implementation.

Sincerely yours,

Ulrika Richardson
UN Development Coordinator

CC: UNKT Heads of Agencies, Funds and Programmes signatories of the UNSDCF 2021-2025



Republika e Kosovës

Republika Kosova-Republic of Kosovo

Qeveria - Vlada - Government

Ms. Ulrika Richardson

03 December 2020

UN Development Coordinator

Dear Ms. Richardson,

I would like to acknowledge the receipt of the final United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (Cooperation Framework) 2021-2025, which reflects the UNKT framework of joint support to Kosovo institutions over the next five years.

The UNSD Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 respectively the Sustainable Development Goals is in line with the Government priorities and EU integration objectives. In addition, this framework supports Kosovo institutions towards sustainable development and economic prosperity as a joint commitment and based on close partnership.

In order to ensure an effective implementation of the Cooperation Framework 2021-2025, we agree to establish a Joint Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Prime Minister and UN Development Coordinator and composed of government representatives and UNKT agencies.

Respectfully yours,

Avdullah Hoti

Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo

CC: UNKT Heads of Agencies, Fund and Programmes signatory of the UNSDCF 2021-2025

Annex 3. The Status of Vulnerable Groups in Kosovo

Persons Left Behind	Challenges	Measures Taken and Suggested Next Steps
<p>Non-majority communities</p> <p>(Kosovo-Roma, Kosovo-Ashkali and Kosovo-Egyptian; Kosovo-Serb; and others)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty: Higher • Housing: Many live in settlements (poor infrastructure, dire conditions, sometimes informal). Discrimination in obtaining documentation deters access to housing services for returnees. • Child labour: Prevalent in some communities • Early marriage: Prevalent in some communities • Mortality and malnutrition: High in some communities • Violence: Prevalent in some communities • Education: Low access for some communities. No curricula, textbooks, materials for non-Albanian speaking students. Parallel education systems perpetuate divisions. • Employment: Discriminatory practices • Birth registration: Lower • Health: Kosovo-Roma, Kosovo-Ashkali, Kosovo-Egyptians display less healthseeking behaviour; Kosovo-Serbs use health services in Serbia, hindering timely access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration strategy and plan: in place • Efforts taken for late birth registration • Law on education: equal educational opportunities; right to be taught in native language through secondary level • CoE Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCPNM) issued Fourth Opinion on Kosovo, noting moderate progress (2016). CoE Committee of Ministers adopted resolution for FCPNM implementation. • Law on freedom of religion: Amendments are needed to reflect recommendations of international bodies (e.g. Venice Commission).
<p>Women and girls</p> <p>Most Left Behind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women from non-majority communities • SGBV victims • Older women • Migrant women • Women with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patriarchal values and discrimination • Under-representation in leadership: Women hold few seats, silencing their voices, especially of minority women. • Low education: Non-majority women have lowest education due to: lack of registration; no teachers/-textbooks in their languages; discrimination; scarce finances; early marriage; household obligations. Dropout furthers isolation. • High unemployment: Only 21.1% of women (v. 59.7% of men) are employed due to: low salaries; care duties; norms • Limited property/inheritance: Women own <20% of properties • Child and early marriage: Prevalent • SGBV: Prevalent. Domestic violence grew with COVID-19; support declined. • Maternal, neonatal and child health services: Low quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience to shocks: Consider how gender influences vulnerability. • Gender equality: CSOs, in particular women's right organizations, are critical in promoting gender equality, advocating against genderbased discrimination, mobilising the government to implement international normative standards, and ensuring the perspectives and voices of minority and marginalised women are heard and incorporated into policy. • SGBV: Improve tracking and reporting on DV/GBV incidents, coordination, and sustainable funding commitments. Ensure accessibility of services (language; transport) for non-majority women.
<p>Children</p> <p>Most Left Behind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children living in economically deprived households • Children living with disabilities 	<p><i>Note: 1/4 children (<18 years) is deprived in at least two dimensions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education: School dropout: High. Fewer rural children complete lower secondary education. • Child labour: 10.7% of children (17% of non-majority children) 6.6% hazardous/ exploitative labour • Street children: Pushed into streets by economic hardship. 74% do not attend school at all, 26% only occasionally • Early marriage: 12% of children, mostly girls, married at <15 years (2018) • Violence: 61% of children (0–14 years) have suffered violence (30% of all children; 40% of non-majority children) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child labour: All forms of forced or compulsory labour are prohibited but compliance, victim identification and protection, and investigation are not effective. Law on child protection (2019) aims to ensure a well-coordinated child protection system to improve the prevention of, and response to, all related forms of violence and exploitation. • Prioritise child rights. • Prioritise inclusion of nonmajority children in the education system. • Strengthen the labour inspectorate and Centres for Social Welfare. • Fund human trafficking shelters.
<p>People on the Move</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment: Surveyed IDPs: 2017: 47% unemployment; 29% of households rely on social benefits as primary income. 2018: 92% Kosovo-Roma, Kosovo-Ashkali and Kosovo- Egyptian female IDPs were jobless Employment initiatives target residents. • Education: IDPs: Few secondary diplomas. Kosovo-Roma, Kosovo-Ashkali, Kosovo-Egyptian IDPs: High illiteracy, no formal education • Housing: IDPs: collective centres, informal settlements, makeshift shelters, no access to public services • Documentation: IDPs: lack proof of status, residence or legal tenure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a holistic, participatory process to understand the intentions and needs of the displaced and receiving/host communities and to seek solutions to displacement, strengthen resilience and limit vulnerability to conflict.

Persons Left Behind	Challenges	Measures Taken and Suggested Next Steps
Persons with disabilities, especially children and youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Life: Largely excluded • Education: Limited access: Lack of specialized staff, transportation, infrastructure, inclusive education policy/legislation. NGOs meet gaps but this is not sustainable or systematic. • Health: Limited access to health care and rehabilitation services; staff are rarely educated/trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise persons with disabilities in development agenda. Reduce stigma and discrimination. Develop human rightsbased reforms (inclusive education, accessible infrastructure, support for independent living, deinstitutionalisation) • Train teachers and assistants • Develop policies and adapted early warning systems to reduce vulnerabilities
LGBTIQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence: Criminal assaults against LGBTIQ people are rarely investigated and prosecuted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Constitution and legal framework prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and address legal gaps on LGBTIQ rights • Awareness-raising: Pride parades (2017, 2018, 2019, 2020) had support of Kosovo Police

Annex 4. Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers

Issues related to the Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT)³¹ are applied to United Nations agencies (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA], United Nations Children’s Fund [UNICEF], under this Cooperation Framework and guided by HACT procedures. The following clauses related to HACT apply to the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes associated with this Cooperation Framework and follow HACT procedures (UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF).

The United Nations agencies, funds and programmes implementing this Cooperation Framework will make all cash transfers to an implementing partner based on workplans agreed between the implementing partner and the United Nations system agencies. Cash transfers for activities detailed in the workplans can be made by the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes using one of the following modalities: **1. Cash may be transferred directly** to the implementing partner: a. prior to the start of activities (direct cash transfer); or b. after activities have been completed (reimbursement). **2. Direct payments may be made to vendors or third parties** for obligations incurred by **implementing partners** per requests signed by the designated official of the implementing partner. **3. Direct payments may be made to vendors or third parties** for obligations incurred by **United Nations agencies, funds and programmes** in support of activities agreed with implementing partners.

Direct cash transfers shall be requested and released for programme implementation periods not exceeding three months. Reimbursements of previously authorised expenditures shall be requested and released quarterly or after completion of activities. The United Nations agencies, funds and programmes shall not be obligated to reimburse expenditure made by the implementing partner over and above the authorised amounts. Following completion of any activity, any balance of funds shall be refunded or programmed by mutual agreement between the implementing partner and the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

³¹ This approach relates to cash transfers using the funds of the United Nations Agencies and international donors and is not applied to government financing.

Cash transfer modalities, disbursement size, and scope and frequency of assurance activities may depend on the findings of a review of the public financial management capacity of a government implementing partner, and of an assessment of the financial management capacity of a non-United Nations³² implementing partner. A qualified consultant, such as a public accounting firm, selected by the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes may conduct such an assessment, and the implementing partner shall participate. The implementing partner may participate in selection of the consultant. Cash transfer modalities, the size of disbursements, and the scope and frequency of assurance activities may be revised in the course of programme implementation based on the findings of programme monitoring, expenditure monitoring and reporting, and audits.

In case of direct cash transfer or reimbursement, the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes shall notify the implementing partner of the amount approved by the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and shall disburse funds to the implementing partner within five working days.

In case of direct payment to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the implementing partners on the basis of requests signed by the designated official of the implementing partner, or to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in support of activities agreed with implementing partners, the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes shall proceed with the payment within five working days.

The Kosovo government will pursue all efforts to ensure cost-sharing for programmes and projects which support implementation of the Cooperation Framework. In cases when the cost-sharing is established in Euros, the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes will have the right to convert the Euros into US Dollars in accordance with United Nations foreign exchange operational rates.

The United Nations agencies, funds and programmes shall not have any direct liability under the contractual arrangements concluded between the implementing partner and a third-party vendor.

Where one United Nations agency and another United Nations agency provide cash to the same implementing partner, programme monitoring, financial monitoring and auditing will be undertaken jointly or coordinated between those United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

A standard Fund Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures (FACE) report, reflecting the activity lines of JWPs will be used by implementing partners to request the release of funds, or to secure the agreement that the United Nations agency will reimburse or directly pay for planned expenditures. Implementing partners will use the FACE to report on the utilization of cash received. The implementing partners shall designate official(s) authorised to provide account details and request and certify the use of cash. The FACE will be certified by the designated official(s) of the implementing partners.

Cash transferred to implementing partners should be spent for the purpose of activities and within the timeframe as agreed in the WPs only. Cash received by the government and local NGO implementing partners shall be used in accordance with established local regulations,

³² For the purposes of these clauses, the United Nations includes the international financial institutions (IFIs).

policies and procedures consistent with international standards, ensuring in particular that cash is expended for activities as agreed in the WPs, and that reports on the utilization of all cash received are submitted to the relevant United Nations agency, fund and programme within six months after receipt of the funds. Where any local regulation, policy or procedure is not consistent with international standards, the United Nations agency, fund and programme financial and other related rules and regulations, policies and procedures will apply.

Where implementing partners are international NGOs, CSOs, and IGOs, cash received shall be used in accordance with international standards, ensuring in particular that cash is expended for activities as agreed in the WPs, and that reports on the full utilization of all received cash are submitted to the United Nations agency, fund and programme within six months after receipt of the funds.

To facilitate scheduled and special audits, each implementing partner receiving cash from a United Nations agency, fund and programme will provide the United Nations agency, fund and programme or its representative with timely access to: **all financial records** which establish the transactional history of the cash transfers provided by a United Nations agency, fund and programme together with relevant documentation; and **all relevant documentation and personnel** associated with the functioning of the implementing partners' internal control structure through which the cash transfers have passed.

The findings of each audit will be reported to the implementing partner and the United Nations agency, fund and programme. Each implementing partner will: **receive and review the audit report** issued by the auditors; **provide a timely statement** of the acceptance or rejection of any audit recommendation to the United Nations organization that provided cash and to the Supreme Audit Institutions (SAI), before submitting it to the United Nations agency, fund and programme; undertake timely actions to **address the accepted audit recommendations**; and **report on the actions taken** to implement accepted recommendations, to the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and to the SAI, on a quarterly basis or as locally agreed. The audits will be commissioned by the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and undertaken by private audit services.

Implementing partners agree to cooperate with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to monitor all activities supported by cash transfers and facilitate access to relevant financial records and personnel responsible for the administration of cash provided by the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. To that effect, implementing partners agree to the following: **1. periodic on-site reviews and spot checks** of their financial records by the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes or their representatives as appropriate, and as described in specific clauses of their engagement documents/contracts with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes; **2. programmatic monitoring of activities** with respect to the United Nations agencies', funds and programmes standards and guidance for site visits and field monitoring; and **3. special or scheduled audits**, whereby each United Nations organization, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes (where so desired and in consultation with the respective coordinating ministry) establishes an annual audit plan, prioritising audits of implementing partners that have received significant cash assistance from the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and those requiring strengthened financial management capacity.

Cash assistance for travel, stipends, honoraria and other costs shall be set at rates commensurate with those applied in Kosovo, but not higher than those applicable to the United Nations system (as stated in the International Civil Service Commission circulars).



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